

Hafa Adai!

OCW670 names 2 memorial scholarship recipients. **PAGE 5**
CNMI affirms key tourism partnerships in Korea. **PAGE 6**

\$1

Saipan Tribune

THE CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER

Volume XXXIII, Issue No. 123

www.saipantribune.com

THURSDAY JUNE 22, 2023

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Court denies IPI motion to dismiss suit filed by Turkish workers

By **KIMBERLY B. ESMORES**
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REPORTER

The U.S. District Court for the NMI

has denied Imperial Pacific International (CNMI) LLC's request to dismiss the discrimination suit filed against it by a group of Turkish

H-2B workers.

A few months ago, IPI filed a motion to dismiss with prejudice the second amended complaint filed by

the Turkish workers employed under H-2B visas to work on IPI's casino resort in Garapan.

Last Monday, District Court for

the NMI Chief Judge Ramona V. Manglona denied in an 18-page order IPI's motion to dismiss, finding

See **COURT** on Page 4

AS TOUCHBACK LOOMS:

Employers urged to prepare

By **KIMBERLY B. ESMORES**
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REPORTER

With just 100 days to go before the implementation of the "touchback" rule that would require hundreds of foreign workers to exit the CNMI, many Common-



Staffler

wealth businesses and affected workers are now girding themselves for what is expected to be a temporary labor vacuum that could impact daily operations.

Many local stores have noticed an increase in purchases of canned goods like processed meat, corned beef, canned tuna, chocolates, and even soaps and shampoos that many depart-

ing workers plan to bring with them when they exit.

Meanwhile, freight company LBC Express has also ran out of boxes and remain

See **EMPLOYERS** on Page 4

'TOUCHBACK' COUNTDOWN
Number of days left until the "touchback" rule takes effect on Sept. 30, 2023:
100

DOL: Settle PUA overpayments

The CNMI Department of Labor is reminding individuals who have received Pandemic Unemployment Assistance and Federal Pandemic Unemployment Compensation benefits in the CNMI and were found to have been overpaid to contact DOL to settle the overpayment.

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the PUA and FPUC programs were established to provide

See **DOL** on Page 4

73 high school students certified in Trading-Up Hospitality Program



By **LEIGH GASES**
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REPORTER

The 73 students who completed the Trading-Up Hospitality

Program through the Northern Marianas Technical Institute and CNMI Public School System were presented their certificates

See **STUDENTS** on Page 4

LEIGH GASES

Marianas High School students received their certificate from the American Hotel and Lodging Educational Institute in an awards ceremony after they passed their Trading-Up Hospitality Program at the Crowne Plaza Resort Saipan last Thursday.

INSIDE



BUSINESS

Saipan Pizza Hut has opened its doors to the public with brand-spanking new fixtures.

PAGE 11



ENVIRONMENT

The world is falling well short of the progress needed to meet the UN's goals by 2030.

PAGE 14



LIFE & STYLE

Andrew Tate, a social media personality, is charged in Romania with rape and human trafficking.

PAGE 15



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Local

GMS promotes 59 students to next education level



The Elementary and Middle School graduates of Green Meadow School.

The Green Meadow School held its combined 20th Kindergarten, 13th Elementary, and 5th Middle School Commencement Exercise at the Pedro P. Tenorio Multi-Purpose Center last June 3.

A total of 59 students—18 Kinder-3 students, 19 Kinder-5 students, 11 elementary students and 11 middle school students—were promoted to the next level in their educational journeys at the ceremony.

GMS principal Milagros M.

Songcuan and board chair Saturnino M. Songcuan led the conferment of diplomas.

Department of Cultural and Community Affairs Secretary Ms. Mary Margaret “Maggie” Sablan was the event’s keynote speaker. She said it is through one’s educational journey “that we learn all our core values.” Her talk referenced Robert Fulghum’s “All I Really Need to Know I Learned in Kindergarten” on how children establish their

lingering core values during that crucial period.

Anaia Rose T. Reyes was the Kinder-3 Gualo Rai valedictorian; the Kinder-3 Chalan Kiya valedictorian was Miah Lynn A. Angcoy; Kinder-5 salutatorian Gualo Rai was Romeo Len P. De Vero; Kinder-5 Chalan Kiya salutatorian was Naa Kowah P. Lartey; Kinder-5 Gualo Rai valedictorian was Katrina Zoe B. Cortez and Kinder-5 Chalan Kiya valedictorian was Ar-

ianne Therese S. Buston.

Donna Flores, CNMI PSS director of Special Education, gave the inspirational speech for the elementary and middle school graduates.

The 5th Grade valedictorian was Jamie Andrea A. Palabay, while the 5th Grade salutatorian was Miel Jewel L. Mabaquiao.

The 8th Grade valedictorian was Paula Angela E. Bernardo, while the salutatorian was Louise Elesha I. Manansala. (PR)

🐾 PET OF THE WEEK

Luke and Piti



Luke



Piti

Luke is a sweet male puppy about 12 to 16 weeks of age and is always ready for some cuddles, loving, and pets.

Piti is a handsome and sweet pitbull mix who is patiently waiting for his forever home.

Both Luke and Piti are available for adoption at the Saipan Mayor’s Office Animal Shelter in As Perdido. Shelter hours are from Monday to Friday, 7:30am to 4:30pm. Contact them if you are interested in any of these cute pets of the week at (670)-234-3647 (DOGS).

For inquiries about veterinary services please reach out to Saipan Humane Society at info@saipanhumane.org or WhatsApp +1 (670) 838-7387. (PR)

Saipan Tribune is partnering with Lauren Cabrera, founder of the Saipan Humane Society, in collaboration with the SMO Animal Shelter in As Perdido, to feature their adoptable dogs into loving homes. Whether you are looking for a guard dog, lap dog, hiking buddy, or playful puppy, they most likely have the dog for you!

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218 Hopwood students go on to high school

» **Ada promises HMS students new facility**

By **CHRYSTAL MARINO**
chrystal_marino@saipantribune.com
CORRESPONDENT



JOHN PETER QUIDATO
Valedictorian



ADRIAN LUBAO
Salutatorian

Hopwood Jr. High School promoted 218 students to high school last June 6, 2023, at their campus in Chalan Piao amid the presence of a large crowd of peers and family members.

Leading the large class was valedictorian and recipient of the Board of Education Award, John Peter Quidato and salutatorian Adrian Lubao, who also received the Commissioner of Education Award. The School Leadership Award went to Andri James Hechanova Sonio.

Heavy rains halted the ceremony for a minute or so, as on-lookers from the outskirts raced to hide under the tents provided, but soon the rain subsided long enough for the entire period of the ceremony.

During his remarks, Education Commissioner Dr. Alfred Ada congratulated the students and encouraged them as they continued their learning endeavors.

Ada also apologized to the school and students for the condition of the school facility, and assured that they were working hard to obtain the funding for the facility.

"...I apologize that at the beginning you had to [have classes] once a week, and then we improved to twice a week, and then five days a week but half-day schedule. I always had you guys in my mind, making sure that teaching and learning happens. It was through the typhoon, the devastation and aftermath of Typhoon Yutu that

really disrupted our teaching and learning, but all throughout we made sure...your princi-

pal made sure...that there was a teacher in the classroom to teach you and to continue your

lessons," Ada said. "As of today, we want to inform you that we are finalizing the contract

for routing the modular classrooms—these are the temporary classrooms—by the end of this week. And we are also working with [the Federal Emergency Management Agency] for the

approval of the main campus. It's not an easy task. We keep communicating with the FEMA district office here and the FEMA in the U.S., and bottom

See 218 on Page 4

TRIPLE J SAYS

YES!

EASY FINANCING? YES!
EASY TRADE-IN? YES!
FAST & FRIENDLY? YES!

USED CAR PRICE, NEW CAR CONFIDENCE

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 STK: 23HZ001
SALE PRICE \$16,995
\$125 PER PAYCHECK

Tazha Deleon Guerrero earns master's degree from Buena Vista

STORM LAKE, IA—Tazha Deleon Guerrero of Saipan graduated with a Master of Education in teacher leadership, curriculum, & instruction (teacher technology integrationist track) from Buena Vista University in spring 2023.

Deleon Guerrero was among more than 300 students who received degrees.

The Buena Vista University campus is located on the shores of Storm Lake. Visit bv.edu for more. (PR)

2017 TOYOTA CAMRY STK:22H313A SALE PRICE \$9,995 \$0 PER PAYCHECK SOLD	2017 TOYOTA COROLLA STK:17P370 SALE PRICE \$16,995 \$125 PER PAYCHECK	2019 MAZDA CX-9 STK: 23HZ002 SALE PRICE \$18,995 \$121 PER PAYCHECK
2016 TOYOTA COROLLA LE STK:18P345B SALE PRICE \$9,995 \$0 PER PAYCHECK SOLD	2018 NISSAN ROGUE STK:18P393 SALE PRICE \$17,995 \$133 PER PAYCHECK	2017 FORD MUSTANG STK:17H51036 SALE PRICE \$19,995 \$147 PER PAYCHECK
2016 MAZDA3 STK:22M028E SALE PRICE \$12,995 \$155 PER PAYCHECK	2016 BUICK VERANO STK:17P505 SALE PRICE \$17,995 \$151 PER PAYCHECK	2016 MITSUBISHI OUTLANDER STK:22H219A SALE PRICE \$19,995 \$178 PER PAYCHECK
2016 HYUNDAI TUCSON STK:23D066A SALE PRICE \$13,995 \$167 PER PAYCHECK	2015 HYUNDAI GENESIS G80 AWD - STK: 22M075A SALE PRICE \$17,995 \$206 PER PAYCHECK	2019 HYUNDAI TUCSON STK:22H161A SALE PRICE \$19,995 \$127 PER PAYCHECK
2017 HYUNDAI SOUL STK: 23D066A SALE PRICE \$13,995 \$103 PER PAYCHECK	2016 HONDA CIVIC STK:21H068A SALE PRICE \$18,995 \$169 PER PAYCHECK	2016 TOYOTA TACOMA SR5 STK:22H274B SALE PRICE \$21,995 \$173 PER PAYCHECK

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WWW.TRIPLEJSAIPAN.COM



Bill to improve OPA probes of public corruption, fraud passes House

By **FERDIE DE LA TORRE**
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The House of Representatives unanimously passed Tuesday a legislation that seeks to im-

prove the Office of the Public Auditor's criminal investigations of fraud, waste, and

abuse in the collection and expenditure of public funds. All 17 House members

'Reduce 'hotel' definition to 50 sleeping rooms'

By **FERDIE DE LA TORRE**
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REPORTER

To encourage and foster tourism and the casino gaming industry on Tinian, the number of minimum sleeping units of a "hotel" or "approved hotel" should be reduced from 200 to only 50 rooms, according to Rep. Patrick H. San Nicolas (R-Tinian).

In line with this, San Nicolas introduced at the House of Representatives special session Tuesday afternoon House Local Bill 23-14 that seeks to amend Tinian Local Law 21-

09 in order to reduce the number of minimum sleeping units under the definition of "hotel" or "approved hotel."

In response to *Saipan Tribune's* inquiry yesterday, the lawmaker said Bridge Investment Group is requesting for the law's amendment as they have the rooms, but the law says it has to be 200 rooms.

In July 2020, Bridge Investment Group announced the opening of their Tinian Diamond Hotel in San Jose Village. It offers 17 appointed rooms with many having bal-

conies where guests can enjoy ocean views.

The Tinian Diamond Casino's live training facility/temporary casino complex will be in the same Tinian Diamond Hotel. The casino has yet to open as it is waiting for the Tinian Casino Gaming Control Commission's action, *Saipan Tribune* learned.

San Nicolas stated in the legislation that the Tinian and Aguiguan Legislative Delegation finds that in order to accommodate the change in the CNMI's current econom-

ic situation as a result of the global effect of COVID-19 pandemic, businesses needed to reassess their structure to remain in operation and allow a change to recover and grow.

He said the delegation further finds that it is necessary to amend Tinian Local Law 21-09 in the interest of encouraging and fostering tourism and the casino industry, in order to make the island more investor friendly and more competitive in the Pacific region.

A longer version of this story is available at www.saipantribune.com

DOL

From page 1

financial support to those who were unemployed, partially unemployed, or unable and/or unavailable to work as a direct result of the pandemic. However, some recipients in the CNMI may have received more benefits than they were eligible for due to several

reasons, such as, but not limited to incorrect/incomplete earnings reported, failure to report their return to work or earnings, or withholding of pertinent employment information.

Recipients who have received a Notice of Overpayment are encouraged to promptly repay the overpaid balance.

To assist in the repayment

process, DOL offers options including making a one-time payment, setting up a scheduled repayment plan, or having the overpayment deducted from future PUA benefits, if applicable. To explore your repayment options, contact the DOL's Benefit Payment Control Unit.

It is important for individuals to promptly report any changes as well as provide all required and requested docu-

ments to avoid overpayment and future offset of applicable benefits, such as tax refunds or wage garnishments.

If you have questions about your PUA benefits or overpayments in the CNMI, contact the CNMI Department of Labor Benefit Payment Control Unit at (670) 322-9941, (670) 322-9943, or (670) 322-9944 for more information or email bpc.cnmidol@gmail.com. (PR)

COURT

From page 1

that the Turkish workers alleged sufficient facts to show that IPI did discriminate against them.

"The court denies IPI's motion to dismiss the second amended complaint with prejudice because plaintiffs' complaint alleges sufficient facts to plausibly show that IPI discriminated against them and proposed class of 107 Turkish H-2B workers," she said.

"The court finds that plaintiffs plausibly allege a prima facie (at first site) case of Title VII discrimination. The differences that IPI cites are

immaterial. Additionally, the seconded amended complaint alleges plausible facts to show that each named plaintiff was discriminated against. The court further finds the Department of Labor statistics anecdotally supportive of the claim of Title VII discrimination. The facts alleging systemic discrimination also support the claim of discrimination," Manglona added.

According to court documents, the court previously granted IPI's motions to dismiss the original complaint and the first amended complaint filed by the Turkish workers, but granted the plaintiffs leave to amend their complaint both times.

Earlier this year, the plain-

tiffs filed their second amended complaint, to which IPI again filed an opposition to and filed a motion to dismiss with prejudice, meaning the case would be dismissed permanently if granted.

The plaintiffs are Özcan Genç, Hasan Gökçe, and Süleyman Köş.

Genç started working for IPI in January 2020 as a foreman and leader of the welding and drywall team—with an employment certificate title of "construction carpenter."

Gökçe started working for IPI in January 2020 as a plumber, plumbing foreman, and master of pipe installation—with an employment certificate title of "plumber."

Köş started working for IPI

in January 2020 as an electrician—with an employment certificate title of "electrician"—and was later promoted to foreman in June 2020.

Toward the end of June 2020, when all IPI H-2B workers were negotiating with IPI to extend their contracts for another six months, one Taiwanese worker showed the plaintiffs his paycheck. That's when the plaintiffs learned that the Taiwanese workers were being paid \$23 an hour, nearly three times what IPI was paying them for the same work.

Plaintiffs further learned that the Italian workers were being paid \$30 an hour, also for the same work that they were doing.

Department of Labor doesn't know the information because it is USCIS that processes the applications. USDOL just approves and monitors the CW funding plans. The survey was my attempt at getting the information," she said.

"Unfortunately, it probably should have been done sooner. But note, this is not even part of my jurisdiction or job. Technically, the CNMI Department of Labor is tasked with monitoring and enforcing the U.S. worker preference part of the law," she added.

As of press time, around 20 employers have participated in the survey but DOL hopes to see more in the next couple of weeks.

present in yesterday's session voted "yes" to pass House Bill 23-44, House Substitute 1. The bill now goes to the Senate for action.

Reps. Edwin K. Propst (D-Saipan), Diego Vincent F. Camacho (D-Saipan), and Julie Marie Atalig Ogo (Ind-Rota) were absent but excused from the session.

Rep. Marissa Renee Flores (Ind-Saipan), who chairs the House Judiciary and Governmental Operations Committee, is the principal author of the bill.

Attorney General Edward Manibusan recently signed a memorandum of understanding with the Office of the Public Auditor and the Department of Public Safety to establish a task force focused on investigating public corruption. Flores said House Bill 23-44 codifies this agreement and make sure it's renewed every year.

STUDENTS

From page 1

in an awards ceremony last Thursday at the Hibiscus Hall of the Crowne Plaza Resort Saipan.

The students from three of Saipan's public high schools—23 from Marianas High School, 25 from Saipan Southern High School, and 25 from Kagman High School—are now certified by the American Hotel and Lodging Educational Institute or AHLEI.

Out of 73 graduates, 19 graduated with honors.

Tyce Mister was the instructor for MHS, Glenn Policare and Larry Lee were the instructors for Kagman High School, and Alyone Gersonde was the instructor for Saipan Southern High School.

The "Trading Up" Program—a collaboration between PSS and NMTECH—is a dual enrollment program where interested PSS students enroll in NMTECH hospitality classes and receive credit toward graduation and, upon completion of any course, also get a nationally recognized certificate.

In Thursday's ceremony, Pacific Islands Club Saipan, LaoLao Bay Golf & Resort, Aqua Resort Club, Saipan World Resort, Saipan Surfrider, and Crowne Plaza Resort Saipan were also awarded certificates of appreciation for their participation in the hands-on training of students in the program.

In attendance with the students and their family members were Gov. Arnold I. Palacios, Education Commissioner Dr. Alfred B. Ada, NMTECH CEO Jodina Attao, Island Training Solutions owner Jim Arenovski, CNMI PSS Co-Op program coordinator Brandon Nicolas, and other dignitaries.

Arenovski said of the students, "These young adults are

"This bill is a strong step in the right direction for the Commonwealth. We need our strongest investigative agencies working together on a regular basis," she said.

Edward Cabrera, chief investigator for the Investigative Division of OPA, disclosed the signing of the memorandum of understanding among OPA OGA, and DPS at the JGO Committee meeting last month, during which the legislation was among the bills discussed. The task force will focus on investigating white collar crimes, government corruption, consumer protection, and financial crimes.

Cabrera said their goal is to alleviate concerns about unbridled corruption by establishing this task force. He said, among other things, that the absence of accountability for government officials enables unethical and corrupt practices to persist.

motivated and dedicated to their future. Whether they're off to pursue college here or abroad... they will succeed in what they choose to do... This class could not be accomplished without the support and assistance of NMTECH and ITS instructors."

He urged the students to "use your colors vividly. Show your personality, show your smile, show your culture, and be you. Congratulations on an impressive accomplishment. We're all very proud."

Palacios also congratulated the class. "Wonderful things can happen in the hospitality industry. It's not just about providing the service. It's about offering an experience... It's about welcoming our guests from across the globe and making them feel at home," he said. "This is the mission you 73 students have chosen to do one day."

He added, "Whether you choose to join the workforce in this industry, or continue on to further education and career path, remember this achievement is the foundation upon which we build upon your future. So as you embark on this journey, remember that you are the ambassadors of our islands. You carry within you our values, our culture, and our spirit."

"Let's celebrate your achievement, but most importantly, let's celebrate your journey, your dreams, and your potential. We are immensely proud of you and we look forward to the incredible things that you will do," he added.

218

From page 3

line is they have the \$26 million dollars. We don't. All we have to do is be patient and work with them as much as well can. But soon, you will see a newly constructed classroom."

EMPLOYERS

From page 1

unsure of when they will get more. Filipino workers, who make up most of the CNMI's foreign workers, typically fill up these boxes with daily essentials when they leave for the Philippines, hence the temporary shortage for these boxes at LBC.

Because the CNMI's hands are tied when it comes to the expected implementation of the touchback rule this September, the CNMI Department of Labor continues to urge local businesses to reach out to DOL to see how they can help fill labor gaps.

Labor Secretary Leila Staffler concedes that the departure of many CNMI-Only Transitional Visa Workers is worrisome, but she wants the business community to know that all hope is not lost.

She said the CNMI has some great training programs in place and she encourages employers to look into DOL's programs in the meantime as the department is willing and ready to help in the transition from contract workers to local workers.

"Employers who have not taken advantage of the DOL programs should definitely look at what we can offer at WIOA, apprenticeship and employment services to help you transition

when your CW worker must leave as per U.S. Public Law 115-218 or the Northern Mariana Islands Workforce Act of 2018," she said.

Currently, Staffler said, there is no clear picture of home many workers will be leaving, but she hopes to gain some insight in the next couple of weeks as employers fill out DOL's ongoing foreign labor survey.

"To be honest, I do not expect to have a clear picture. If businesses and agencies do not share their data, then I have no picture. [U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services] does not share this information. Yet, I'm working on building a relationship with them. The U.S.

OCW670 names 2 memorial scholarship recipients

Our Common Wealth 670 has awarded scholarships to two students from the Marianas: D'anahlei Rodriguez of Kagman High School and Jill Anne Mallari of Mount Carmel School. These scholarships were created

in honor of two founding members of OCW670, the late Retta Sue Hamilton and Jacinta M. Kaipat.

Eligible students drafted an essay that demonstrated how their higher education pursuits align with and/or promotes

OCW670's mission to "protect our ancestral lands, seas, and skies from irreparable damage caused by military practices and other developments that pose a threat to our health, physical environment, and livelihoods..." The OCW670 board

of directors spearheaded essay evaluations and the final selection of recipients.

"With our islands being placed at the center of so many geopolitical discussions about the U.S.-China competition in the Pacific, these essays reflect

a sense of urgency to protect our beautiful islands for many generations to come," said OCW670 board chair Dr. Theresa "Isa" Arriola.

Rodriguez's essay recounted her strolls with her Tāta and siblings through gardens littered with rusted military equipment. She acknowledges that these remnants of wars will continue to stay on our lands and impact today's youth. Rodriguez intends to study Public Governance at Boise State University. Rodriguez concludes her essay with a proverb from her Tāta that outlines her vision for herself "Sengsongmu i gualo'mu, abonuyi kulan i lancheru, protehi kulan gumā'mu, ya siempre hāo satisfetchu.' Your village is your garden, nourish it like a farmer, protect it like your home, and you will be fulfilled."

Mallari's essay, titled "Oceanic Paradise," shared her realization that the image of the Marianas as a tropical island

paradise was not entirely true. Mallari intends to pursue a Political Science degree at the University of San Diego where she aims to elevate people's awareness of the environmental issues facing the Marianas and the broader Pacific. Mallari ends her essay with the realization that "only by protecting our culture, land, and ocean will the next generation grow up in the paradise of today."

OCW670 is in awe of the powerful voices of Rodriguez, Mallari, and all the other students who submitted essays. OCW670 is grateful to continue this annual tradition of supporting passionate Marianas youth to pursue higher education for the benefit of their academic growth and the Marianas. **(PR)**



Rodriguez



Mallari

LDS church to dedicate new Saipan chapel

A new chapel for Saipan Ward of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints has been now been completed.

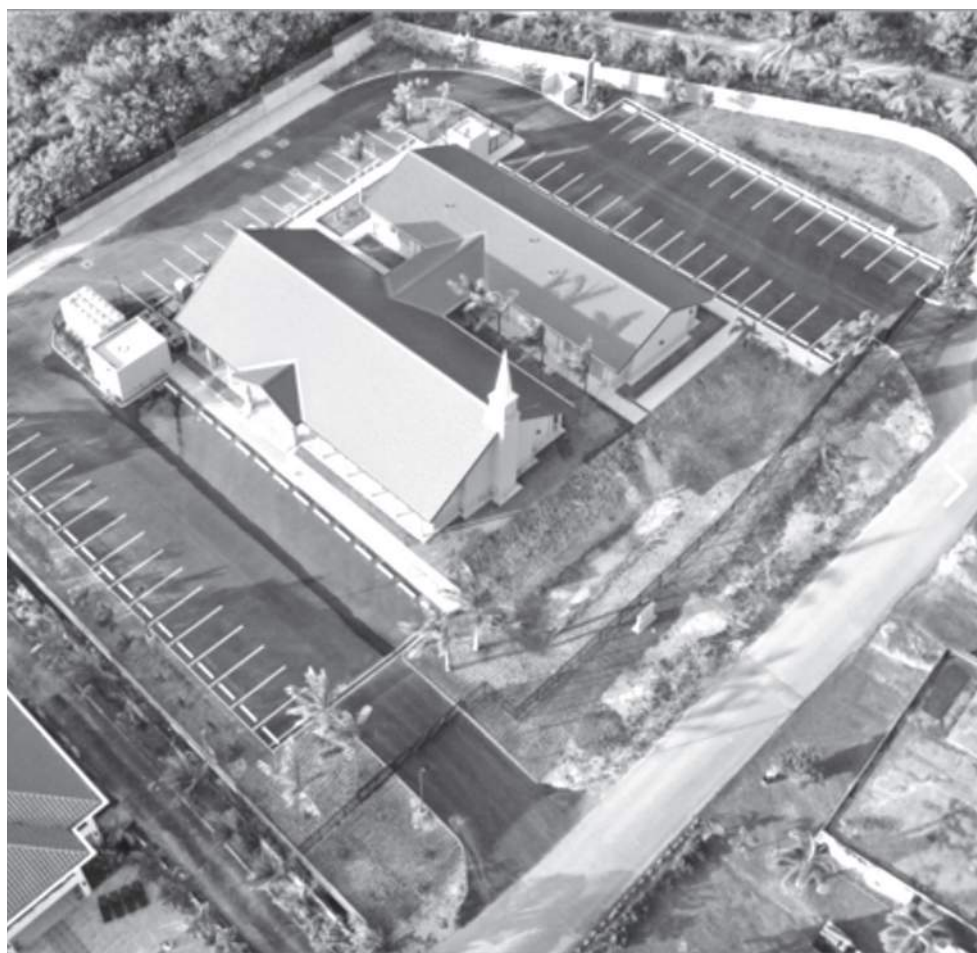
The new structure is located along Katbon Drive in San Vicente overlooking the Lau Lau Bay. It is 8,400 square feet in size, making it considerably larger than the building it replaces. The church broke ground for the chapel construction last July 24, 2021.

To celebrate the completion of the construction, there will be a public open house on July 7, 2023, from 3pm to 5pm. The public is invited to attend during the scheduled times to enjoy a guided tour of the building. Here is a Google pin drop of the chapel's location: <https://goo.gl/maps/2EuwfEWg4pQsaERFA>

To conclude the evening, there will be a dance and singing presentation celebrating local culture.

To culminate the celebration the new chapel will be dedicated on July 9, 2023 following normal Sunday meetings beginning at 10am.

Members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints on Saipan



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

There will be a public open house for the new meetinghouse of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints on July 7, 2023, from 3pm to 5pm. The public is invited to a guided tour of the building.

have been previously attending church in a chapel in Chalan Lau Lau but the

40-year lease has already expired, resulting in the construction of the new chapel,

which the church technically calls a "meetinghouse." **(Saipan Tribune)**

Manta Ray cadets assist in SSHS graduation ceremony

Cadets of Saipan Southern High School's Manta Ray Battalion played an instrumental role in performing duties during the graduation ceremony at the SSHS main campus last June 6, 2023.

The cadets did road guard duties prior to the ceremony by guiding motorists on where they can park so they could attend the graduation ceremony. The cadets guided vehicles on the day of the ceremony, ensuring

all safety protocols were upheld.

Also, the battalion's Color Guard skillfully executed the presentation, posting, and retiring of the colors during the ceremony itself on the school's main stage, from 4pm to 6pm.

Leading the Color Guard team was cadet 1SG Sean Vilaluz, who carried the U.S. flag. Assisting him were cadet 2LT Coby Rabauliman as the left guard and cadet SFC Mathew Salas as the right guard. Cadet /2LT Logan Mendiola carried the CNMI flag.

Every year, different groups of volunteer cadets provide road guard assistance for the graduating seniors of Saipan Southern High School. Prior to the graduation ceremony, cadets undergo thorough briefings on effectively guiding vehicles to designated parking areas. Each cadet is assigned to a specific group, assuming responsibility for designated parking areas scattered throughout the school campus.

The commencement ceremony was a joyful celebration for the graduating seniors, symbolizing the completion of a challenging and difficult year. With their high school journey coming to an end, they embark upon an exciting new chapter in their lives. **(PR)**



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Saipan Southern High School's Manta Ray Battalion Color Guard execute the presentation, posting, and retiring of the colors during the graduation ceremony at the SSHS main campus last June 6, 2023.

Register for Chamber's Q2 professional dev't training

The Saipan Chamber of Commerce is reminding everyone about its upcoming 2nd Quarter Professional Development Training, led by Jim Arenovski of Island Training Solutions. The training sessions are scheduled to take place on Wednesday, June 28, 2023, providing participants with two options to accommodate their availability. The training will be held at the Island Training Solutions training room on the sixth floor (Suite 604) of the Marianas Business Plaza.

The training sessions are as follows:

1. Morning session: 9am–12pm
2. Afternoon session: 1:30pm–4:30pm

Registration is still ongoing for this valuable training opportunity. The registration fee is set at \$50 for Saipan Chamber of Commerce members and \$60 for future Chamber members. The Chamber is also offering a special discount of \$5 per individual when enrolling three or more participants. Interested individuals are encouraged to sign up today by visiting the Saipan Chamber of Commerce website at www.saipanchamber.com. Alternatively, they can contact the Chamber at (670) 234-7150 or email contactus@saipanchamber.org for further assistance.

The Saipan Chamber of Commerce strongly encourages businesses across all sectors to take advantage of this professional development training. Investing in staff development is key to retaining existing customers and attracting new ones, ultimately driving business growth and success.

Payments for the training can be made in cash, by check, or with major debit/credit cards. Payment options include in-person payments at the Chamber's office on the second floor (Suite 201-A) of the Marianas Business Plaza. Office hours are from Monday to Friday, 8am–12pm and 1pm–5pm. Please note that the Chamber's office is closed on weekends. **(SCC)**

STRIPE PAYMENTS COMPANY

NOTICE OF WITHDRAWAL

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE that Stripe Payments Company (the "Corporation"), a foreign corporation, is applying for a Certificate of Withdrawal from the CNMI Registrar of Corporations.

Therefore, the Corporation surrenders the authority to transact business in the CNMI and revokes the authority of its registered agent, to accept services on its behalf and appoints the Registrar of Corporations of the CNMI as its agent for service of process in any proceeding based on a cause of action arising during the time it was authorized to transact business in the CNMI.

CNMI affirms key tourism partnerships in Korea

Gov. Arnold A. Palacios and representatives of the Marianas Visitors Authority met with key tourism partners in Korea this month to reaffirm ties and discuss opportunities for further collaboration.

The five-day series of meetings began on June 4, 2023, and included discussions with airlines, travel agencies, government departments, and other partners whose investments have helped make Korea the top source market for tourism in the Marianas.

"The meetings we had were very positive in terms of how our partners perceive their continued investment in the Marianas. It gives us confidence in the continued strong recovery of the Korea market," said MVA acting board chair Gloria Cavanagh. "The trip was also an opportunity for Gov. Palacios to meet and dialogue with top decision-makers in the industry, which is an important part of setting the stage for the next four years of relations. In particular, we are grateful for during our visit of additional flights to the Marianas, and we look forward to building on the discussions we had."

While meeting with the delegation, Jeju Airlines CEO Kim E-bae announced the addition of a third daily flight between Seoul and Saipan beginning on June 29, 2023,



U.S. Ambassador to South Korea Philip S. Goldberg, left, welcome CNMI Gov. Arnold A. Palacios to the embassy on June 8, 2023, in Seoul.

capitalizing on high travel demand to the Marianas. Jeju already provides the highest seat supply to the destination via its double daily flights.

"The Northern Mariana Islands is one of the top destination markets for Koreans, and this additional route will help meet the growing demand," said Kim. "We are looking at other ways we can increase seats and flight service to the CNMI and thank Gov. Palacios for his friendship and partnership."

The delegation also met

with T'Way Air CEO Jeong Hong Guen and other airline executives. Due to the recent cancellation of flights to Guam, which continues to recover from Typhoon Mawar, T'way has scheduled a series of eight semi-weekly charter flights to Saipan from July 23 to August. This is in addition to the daily flight T'way now operates to Saipan. With an average of 94% of those seats filled, the delegation invited T'way to consider adding more regular flights or utilizing larger aircraft to Saipan.

In his meeting with Asiana Airlines executive vice president of Passenger Business Doo



CNMI Gov. Arnold A. Palacios, sixth left, meets with Mode Tour president Yu In Tae, fourth right, on June 7, 2023, in Seoul, Korea.



CNMI Gov. Arnold A. Palacios, third left, meets with vice minister of Ministry of Land, Infrastructure and Transport Eo Meyong-so, far right, on June 9, 2023, in Seoul, Korea.

SungGuk, Palacios expressed the Marianas' appreciation for 30 years of partnership with the airline, while Asiana shared an overview of their marketing campaign for the destination and an update on sales.

A delegation paid a courtesy call on U.S. Ambassador to South Korea Philip S. Goldberg, who has joined by commercial officer Michael Kim and senior commercial specialist Jessica Son. The

importance of the tourism as the primary export of the Marianas was discussed. Goldberg also offered to host a series of travel trade seminars for the Marianas in Korea.

Top executives of the leading travel agencies in Korea also welcomed the delegation for talks during the visit. President Yu In Tae of Mode Tour expressed his concern for the people of the Marianas affected by Typhoon Mawar, which heavily impacted the island of Rota. Discussions were also held on the need for all private and public partners to have a contingency plan should Korean travelers be delayed in their departure from the islands due to any natural disaster.

In a meeting with President Kim Jin Kook of Yellow Balloon Tour, the delegation expressed their appreciation for the company's aggressive sales that have made Yellow Balloon one of the top-selling tour operators of the Marianas. The company noted that the

Marianas shows the highest sales increase in proportion to promotional investment. Discussion was also held on educational tourism, including the fact that credits earned at Northern Marianas College are transferrable to many post-secondary institutions in the U.S. mainland.

CEO Song Misun of Hana Tour, the No. 1 travel agency in Korea, welcomed the delegation and announced they are working on a new product to capitalize on the Marianas as a multi-island destination. This year the tour company is developing a tour product specific to Tinian, which it believes will help differentiate the Marianas from other competitors and destinations. The Hana Tour team noted that price competitiveness is still a factor to be considered and that having affordable access and a unique tour product featuring multiple islands will be strategic in setting the Marianas apart. The MVA also introduced educational tourism opportunities for children and families.

Palacios' final meeting of the trip was with vice minister of Ministry of Land, Infrastructure and Transport Eo Meyong-so and other representatives of the Korea Ministry of Lands, Infrastructure and Transport in Sejong. MOLIT was the key partner in the Korea government in working with the Marianas in the midst of the pandemic to establish a travel bubble and restart international flights to Saipan. Palacios requested MOLIT's active support for the continuance and support of airline service to the Marianas. He also highlighted the Marianas' capabilities to respond to natural disasters, making Saipan one of the safest overseas destinations for Korean travelers.

Meetings were also held with other tourism partners. The MVA projects to recover over 266,899 air seats from Korea this fiscal year, about 80% compared to pre-pandemic numbers. (MVA)



CNMI Gov. Arnold A. Palacios meets with Jeju Airlines CEO Kim E-bae on June 7, 2023, in Seoul, Korea, to affirm ties with the air carrier.



CNMI Gov. Arnold A. Palacios, front right, meets with Asiana Airlines executive vice president of Passenger Business Doo SungGuk, front left, on June 7, 2023, in Seoul, Korea.



CNMI Gov. Arnold A. Palacios, left, meets with T'Way Air CEO Jeong Hong Guen on June 7, 2023, in Seoul, Korea.



CNMI Gov. Arnold A. Palacios, second right, meets with Yellow Balloon president Kim Jin Kook, second left, on June 8, 2023, at the travel agency headquarters in Seoul.



CNMI Gov. Arnold A. Palacios, left, meets with CEO Song Misun of Hana Tour, the No. 1 travel agency in Korea, on June 8, 2023, in Seoul, Korea.

Q&A: Does TRICARE cover care when traveling overseas?

FALLS CHURCH, Va.—Exploring different countries and cultures is exciting. As you plan your trip, you may have some questions about what coverage TRICARE offers when you travel overseas. It's important to prepare for your trip with your health care in mind.

"While traveling overseas, the rules for getting care depend on your sponsor status, your health plan, and your location," said Michael Griffin, program analyst with the TRICARE Overseas Program Office at the Defense Health Agency. "Being prepared to seek health care while traveling is as important as packing the right clothes for your trip. You should know your options for accessing care overseas, as well as what you'll need to do when you return home."

The following questions and answers will help you prepare for your trip and learn how to get health care overseas if you need it.

Q: Does TRICARE cover me if I need emergency care?

A: Yes. If you reasonably think you have an emergency, call the emergency number of the country you're in, or go to the nearest emergency room. The TRICARE Overseas contractor, International SOS, provides 24/7 support if you need urgent or emergency care. Choose the country where you're located for a list of contact numbers, including the Medical Assistance number.

If you're admitted to the hospital overnight, notify the TRICARE Overseas Program Regional Call Center within 24 hours or on the next business day. After you return home, contact your health care provider, as you may need follow-up care.

Under certain circumstances, TRICARE may cover air evacuations.

Q: What should I do if I get sick on my trip?

A: For medical conditions that aren't emergencies but need professional attention within 24 hours or any other nonemergency care, active duty service members must seek care at military hospitals or clinics when possible. Everyone else should follow their health plan's rules for getting urgent care overseas. If you need to quickly find a provider overseas, use the provider search tool or call International SOS.

If you need medical advice, the Military Health System Nurse Advice Line might be an option. It's a free service available outside the United States in any country with a military hospital or clinic.

Remember that whatever type of health care you receive, you may need to pay up front and file a claim with the over-

seas claims processor to be reimbursed. Be sure to keep all receipts associated with your care.

Q: Can I refill a prescription overseas?

A: If you must fill prescription while traveling, remember: Military pharmacies are an option if one is close by.

TRICARE retail network pharmacies are only located in the United States, Puerto Rico, Guam, the Northern Mariana Islands, and the U.S. Virgin Islands. As outlined in the TRICARE Pharmacy Program Handbook, if you go to an overseas pharmacy, be prepared to pay for your prescription up front and file a pharmacy claim with the overseas contractor for reimbursement on covered drugs.

Q: Do I need to purchase additional travel health insurance?

A: No, but it's a personal decision. If you're considering buying extra health insurance, keep in mind that all private and travel insurance policies pay before TRICARE. If you get care while traveling overseas, you'll need to file your claim for reimbursement with your travel insurance first. Then submit the claim to TRICARE, along with the explanation of benefits from your travel insurance provider for the care you received.

Q: What else should I do before I leave on my trip?

A: TRICARE suggests several items to put on your pre-travel to-do list:

Before you leave, log in to milConnect and check that your personal and contact information is up to date in the Defense Enrollment Eligibility Reporting System (DEERS). If your information is incorrect in DEERS, it could affect your TRICARE coverage.

Get any routine health care needs completed before traveling overseas.

Refill your prescriptions before traveling. If you tell your doctor about your upcoming travel, they can authorize up to a 90-day supply. Pack your prescriptions in your carry-on bag so you'll have them with you if your luggage is delayed or lost.

Depending on where you're traveling, check with your doctor to ensure you're up to date with all necessary vaccinations. Call well ahead of time so you can schedule an appointment and get vaccinated prior to your departure.

Download the TRICARE Contact Wallet Card. It lists the numbers to use if you need health care services or support when traveling.

Planning makes all the difference in creating an enjoyable, stress-free overseas journey. Know how your TRICARE coverage works overseas so

you'll be ready if you need health care services while traveling. Bon voyage!

Would you like the latest TRICARE news sent to you by email? Visit TRICARE Subscriptions, and create your personalized profile to get benefit updates, news, and more. (Defense Health Agency)

PEXELS.COM

Know how your TRICARE coverage works overseas so you'll be ready if you need health care services while traveling.



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Opinion

Hafa Adair

Saipan Tribune

THE CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER
Volume XXXIII, Issue No. 123Published daily at 2/F JP Center,
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EDITORIAL

Draconian COVID restrictions did more harm than good

Ronald Reagan famously said, “The nine most terrifying words in the English language are: I’m from the government, and I’m here to help.” What an apt summation of the government’s heavy-handed efforts to fight the coronavirus.

The Institute of Economic Affairs recently published a book on the effectiveness of pandemic lockdowns. The authors include a professor from Johns Hopkins and professor emeritus from Lund University in Sweden. “The results of our meta-analysis support the conclusion that lockdowns in the spring of 2020 had a negligible effect on COVID-19 mortality,” they wrote. “This result is consistent with the view that voluntary changes in behavior, such as social distancing, did play an important role in mitigating the pandemic.”

They find that the average lockdown in the United States in spring 2020 averted 16,000 deaths. That’s a significant number, but consider the context. In the United States, an average of 38,000 people each year die from the flu. But no one ever suggested locking down the country to prevent flu deaths.

That’s because society’s elected representatives must balance competing priorities. If you lock down to prevent COVID or flu deaths, you create other negative public health issues that can have long-term ramifications.

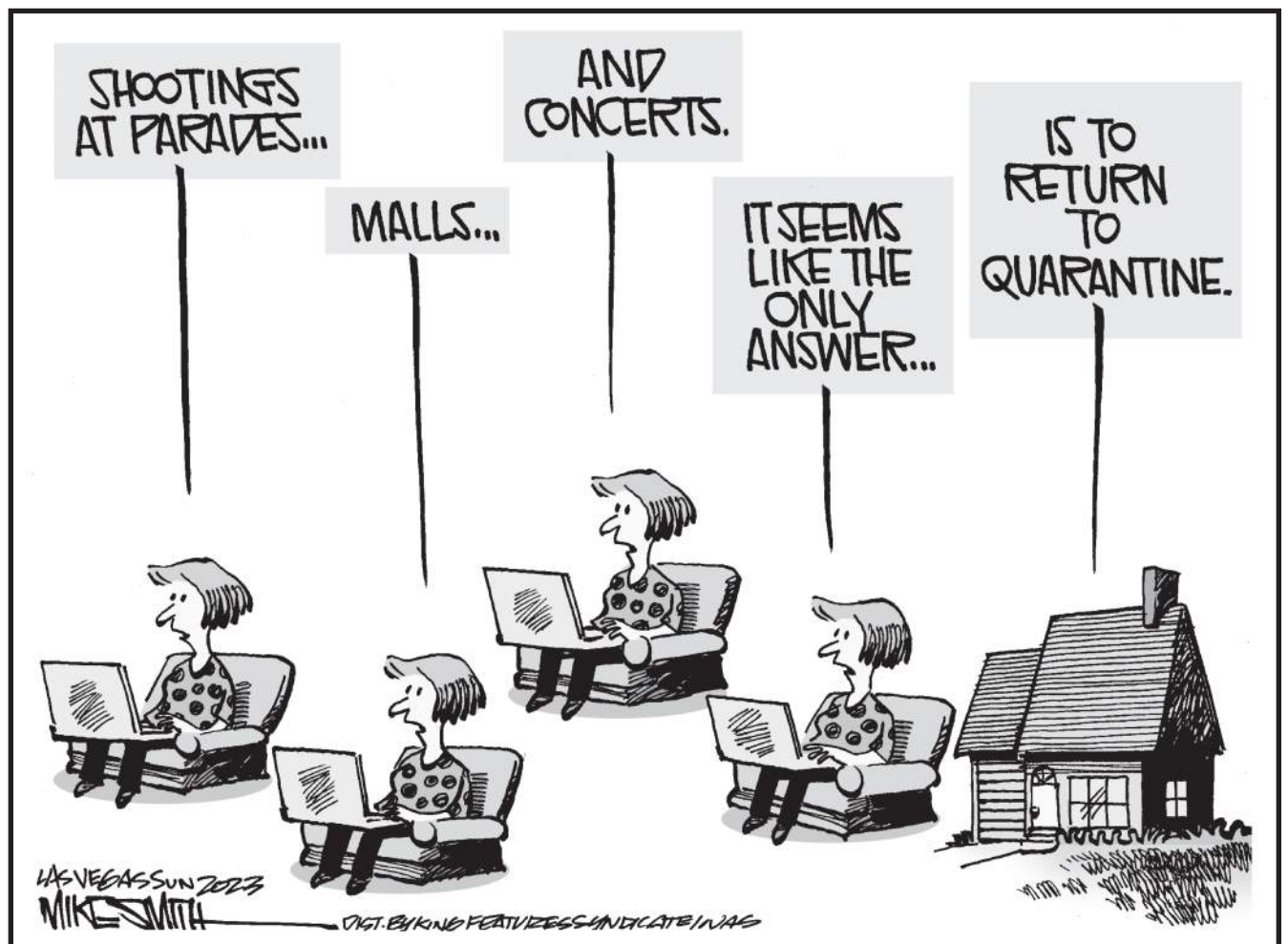
In 2019, fewer than 71,000 people died from drug overdoses. In 2020, that number spiked up to more than 91,000. Tragically, it isn’t coming down. Last year, it increased to 109,000. There are many factors in overdose deaths, including the rise of fentanyl, but it’s foolish to think lockdowns didn’t contribute to them. Suicide and homicide rates have increased since 2019, too. This suggests it’s probable that the side effects of lockdowns will produce more American deaths than were saved by the restrictions.

There were other factors to consider. Online learning was a disaster. The Nation’s Report Card showed the pandemic and school closures wiped away 20 years of learning gains. The best students lost a little ground, but the lowest-performing students saw their scores fall four times as far. This makes them more likely to drop out of school and suffer later consequences. Those results will take decades to unfold, but they’re real.

“In the final analysis, these infringements generated negligible public health benefits while imposing a set of massive costs on society,” the authors note. They correctly call the lockdowns “a global policy failure of gigantic proportions.”

This is an important lesson for politicians and the public: Consider more than just a single variable when evaluating the merits of a proposed policy.

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Are book bans unconstitutional? They are certainly political

In Missouri, the Pulitzer Prize-winning graphic novel “Maus” about the Holocaust faces possible removal from schools for at least the third time over its depiction of a female character in a bathtub.

In South Carolina, an Advanced Placement teacher has been forced to abandon her lesson about systemic racism using “Between the World and Me” by Ta-Nehisi Coates after some students complained about feeling uncomfortable.

And in Southern California, elementary school students in the Temecula Valley Unified School District may be short of textbooks next year after the board of education voted against approving a curriculum that includes mention of slain gay rights leader Harvey Milk.

These incidents happened within the last month as a wave of book banning continues to spread nationwide. People pushing for bans do so under the guise of protecting kids from material inappropriate for their age, but a closer look at the books targeted reveals an ugly pattern. Most were about or written by people who are LGBTQ+ and people of color, especially Black writers. Such commonalities suggest a concerted effort to expunge books by writers from these communities.

It’s heartening that public leaders, civil rights organizations, parents, students and others are increasingly challenging the constitutionality of book restrictions. President Joe Biden announced that he will appoint a federal coordinator to address the surge of book bans.

Gov. Gavin Newsom, Attorney General Rob Bonta and Superintendent of Public Instruction Tony Thurmond early this month jointly issued a five-page warning to California’s school superintendents reminding them that the U.S. Constitution restricts the removal of books from libraries and curriculum. They also noted that the state education code requires public schools to provide instruction on “the role and contributions of both men and women, Native Americans, African Americans, Mexican Americans, Asian Americans, Pacific Islanders, European Americans, lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender Americans, persons with disabilities, and members of other ethnic and cultural groups.”

In a tweet earlier this month reacting to the textbook vote at the Temecula school district, Newsom wrote, “In the Golden State, our kids have the freedom to learn.” Californians are fortunate to have state officials actively fighting for the free expression of ideas. The residents of other states aren’t as lucky.

Arkansas Gov. Sarah Sanders, for example, believes that librarians should face criminal penalties for distributing material that is harmful to kids. But who decides what is harmful? Not surprisingly, a coalition of groups such as the Arkansas Library Assn. has filed a lawsuit alleging that the book ban law, which goes into effect in Au-

By MINERVA CANTO
Los Angeles Times

Minerva Canto is an editorial writer focusing on education, health care and other social issues. She is a longtime journalist whose work explores the places where politics, policies and people converge.



gust, does not respect intellectual freedom and is unconstitutional. The suit says the law is a direct attack on free speech.

Banning books is not just about removing certain reading material from school and library shelves, but about restricting ideas. Rarely do these conversations about restricting books include their educational or artistic benefits. It seems easier to remove books based on key words or one picture rather than debate their merits.

This is what’s happening with the graphic nonfiction novel “Maus” by Art Spiegelman. The book has been widely lauded for its deft and powerful depiction of the horrors of the Holocaust. However, one picture of a woman in a bathtub showing an angled view of her breasts may violate a newly passed state law that threatens teachers with up to a year in jail if convicted of providing “explicit sexual material to a student.”

Not surprisingly, the law has had a chilling effect on school districts in Missouri, which have pulled more than 300 book titles from library shelves since the law was passed last year.

Book bans have been increasing since 2021, when the “parental rights” movement sprang up. These parents claim they want a bigger say in school matters, but what they really seem to want is to have their conservative viewpoint be the only one represented in the schools.

More than 2,500 books were the targets of bans in the U.S. last year, nearly double the previous year, the most in a single year since such data began to be collected more than 20 years ago, according to the American Library Assn.

Branches of the American Civil Liberties Union have increasingly been filing lawsuits challenging these book removals in various states. Eventually, courts will have to decide whether bans violate laws protecting freedom of speech, equal protection or other anti-censorship laws.

I hope they do so soon. As a parent, I know that books should be viewed as tools of enlightenment, not tools of oppression.

Trump cites ‘American carnage.’ The real carnage is the devastation he leaves in his wake.

For loyal service to Donald Trump both in the White House and since—as valet, Diet Coke gofer and occasional box mover—Walt Nauta now finds himself joined even closer to his boss: as the former president’s co-defendant. You have to feel sorry for the guy.

Nauta presumably could have avoided the six federal criminal counts against him, and the prospect of many years in prison, if he’d just cooperated with federal prosecutors to help build a case against their real target, Trump, for swiping classified documents and conspiring to hide them from the government. Nauta could still flip, though that’s thought unlikely. The fact that he has chosen not to help the feds doesn’t make him a less sympathetic figure.

No, the 40-year-old Navy veteran is a tragic figure, whatever the legal outcome. On the orders of his former commander in chief, according to the indictment, Nauta obediently moved boxes containing classified material from room to room at Mar-a-Lago to hide them from investigators and even from Trump’s lawyer, then lied to the FBI about his actions.

Nauta’s misplaced loyalty puts him at the front of an immeasurably long line of people, both famous and obscure, who’ve had their lives upended somehow by the egomaniacal Trump.

Some of those people worked for the former president, in positions high and (like Nauta) low, only to be drawn knowingly or otherwise into legal or ethical scrapes, or publicly shamed if they resisted Trump’s schemes. Few emerged from that employment without reputational damage—not Cabinet secretaries or press secretaries. Some served time, including Trump’s personal lawyer Michael Cohen and his company’s longtime chief financial officer, Allen Weisselberg.

Other casualties didn’t actually work for Trump—except that in his mind, everyone does. Think of the 2020 election administrators nationwide who found themselves strafed by his verbal fire, then by his MAGA followers’ death threats, when they disputed

Trump’s election-fraud lies. The lifelong Republican on Arizona’s Maricopa County Board of Supervisors, Bill Gates, struggles with PTSD. As Ruby Freeman, a Black election volunteer in Georgia, asked the House Jan. 6 committee after testifying about the racist attacks she and her daughter endured when Trump falsely accused them of vote fraud: “Do you know how it feels to have the president of the United States to target you?”

Some Trump targets have been heartlessly attacked simply for criticizing him, like the Gold Star parents whose Muslim son, an Army captain, died in Iraq and who objected to Trump’s anti-Muslim rhetoric. Still other victims were simply anonymous pawns in Trump’s political games, like the thousands of migrant children separated from their families at the border, roughly a thousand of whom still haven’t been reunited with relatives years later.

Forget about judging the defeated president on his policy prescriptions; reasonable people can differ about those. Even set aside his penchant for bending, if not breaking, the law when it suits him; at least he’s beginning to be held accountable—probably including charges, before long, for his efforts to overturn his loss to Joe Biden and to incite an insurrection.

What remains perhaps the single most compelling argument for Trump’s unfitness for the presidency is his cruelty, his willingness to use people for his own ends, regardless of the peril for them and their families, and his entirely selfish maliciousness toward countless others, for any reason or no reason.

We haven’t seen anyone like him before in the presidency. We never should again.

Do a computer search of “For Trump, loyalty is a one-way street” or “Donald Trump” and “throw you under the bus”—favorite sayings of his many estranged associates—and you get millions of hits covering years, as well as this week’s articles involving Nauta.

Cohen, the ex-con ex-Trump lawyer who speaks from experience, has been quoted using both phrases. He laments that Nauta hasn’t aided prosecutors to save himself jail time: “Loyalty, to Don-

...The single most compelling argument for Trump’s unfitness for the presidency is his cruelty, his willingness to use people for his own ends...

By JACKIE CALMES

Los Angeles Times

Jackie Calmes is an opinion columnist for the Los Angeles Times in Washington, D.C.



ald Trump, is like 1st Avenue in Manhattan: one way.” On MSNBC, Cohen looked straight into the camera as if talking to Nauta and said, “Run as fast as you can, my friend ... because Donald Trump will throw you under the bus faster than you could possibly imagine.”

Another former Trump lawyer, Ty Cobb, likewise feels sorry for Nauta. “I’d be shocked if Trump said 10 words a day to him,” Cobb told the Washington Post. And two of those words, Cobb added, would not be “Thank you.”

After the indictment of Trump and Nauta, the former president praised his valet and protested on his social media site that the FBI and the Justice Department “are trying to destroy his life, like the lives of so many others.”

Trump was projecting again.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Poisoning our world

- What does nature mean to you?
- What questions do you have about connections between nature and your community, especially with regard to the state of coastal and marine ecosystems?
- How would you use the findings of the National Nature Assessment? What kinds of products would be useful?
- How should the Assessment team engage the public as the National Nature Assessment is developed?

Does it really matter what nature means to me? Why would anyone care that I think nature is the very basis of our humanity and that no matter how we try to progress away from the base, we always lose to its wrath, reacting to our attempt at slowly try to kill the only world we know we can exist and can live in? The little people from their own little worlds are somewhat isolated from the rest of the powerful world seeking world dominance and therefore our voices are low and do not resonate across the world where all the most dangerous attempts at destroying the earth take place.

Take, for instance, the U.S. military using small islands to practice with their deadly arsenals and Japan getting ready to dump nuclear waste into the Pacific Ocean—one of the fabrics of our soul and existence—so it can create more of the lucrative poisonous energy sources for its country.

The U.S. military claims no knowledge of Japan’s plan, but Japan, I am most certain, is aware that there is military buildup in the Marianas. But does either one of them care that the two activities may not mesh well and there is no certainty but the death of ocean life that thrives in our little orbits? The United Nations and World Health Organization are of no help either as neither one of them is actively monitoring the level of nuclear waste proliferation. I will say, with the same certainty, that they do monitor nuclear weaponry output, especially in regions they consider unfriendly to them while treading most carefully to adhere to their international agreements lest they may find themselves adversaries.

Oh, there are reports galore, but all those reports have not acted as catalysts to encourage a cohesive effort to ease climate change and further poisoning of the earth.

So, the next question that asks, what questions might I have about connections between nature and your community, especially with regard to the state coastal and marine ecosystem? My short answer to that is don’t waste my time and yours. If world leaders do not come together and address these issues uniformly and collaboratively, there is nothing that little people like us can say that will make a difference. We don’t have the expertise or the resources, and we heavily rely on expert opinions paid for by the Big Brothers of the world and we find them to be either watered down or not completely transparent. Take, for instance, Japan. It states in its laid-out plans to dump so many gallons of treated nuclear wastewater containing tritium into the Pacific Ocean, but pay careful attention to what Japan isn’t stating—the volume of tritium in each gallon is absent. Note, too, that their safety declaration is based on research in a lab, which by its own restrictions cannot be equated to what will happen in open water with varying existing elements, some known, and some unknown.

Juanita M. Mendiola
Tinian

June is LGBTQ+ Pride month

LITERARY NOOK

By JOEY CONNOLLY

Special to the Saipan Tribune

Joey aka Pepe Batbon Connolly is a retired educator who taught in the CNMI, NOLA, and LVNV. He is a sonnet practitioner who enjoys stargazing.



The letter “L” at the beginning of LGBTQ+ stands for lesbian. Sappho (630 - 570 BC) was a Greek poetess from the island of Lesbos. Beyond her poetry she is well known as symbol of love and desire between women. The words “Sapphic” and “lesbian” derive from her name and place of birth.

Here are poems by American lesbian poets. Elizabeth Bishop (1911-1979) was U.S. Poet Laureate from 1949 to 1950. Kay Ryan was born in 1945 and served as the U.S. Poet Laureate from 2008-2010.

I highly recommend that readers look up Bishop’s poem The Fish, which is too long to publish here. Bishop’s poems have inspired me to write several sonnets.

I heard Kay Ryan read her poems to a packed auditorium in Las Vegas while I lived there. She spoke eloquently of the recent loss of her partner.

Both were community college teachers.

I chose poems dealing with the ocean to share here in the CNMI.

The Wave

(Written by Elizabeth Bishop when she was 18 years old, 1929)

A shining wave
Fills all the skies
Bright shadows float
Across the land.

See, crystal clear,
Its helmet rise!
And now the motion
Of a hand,
A tiny quickening
Of the heart,
And it will fall
And nothing more
Can keep the sea and land apart.
How still, how blinding is the light!
Spellbound and golden shines the foam.
Without a gesture
Or a word
It cannot break;
The wing must turn, and nest again
The radiant bird,
The wave, the wonder, go back home.
We do not move,
We do not flee,
We see it shudder, lightning bright,
And dully double
On the sea
We are too innocent and wise,
We laugh into each other’s eyes.

Chop

By Kay Ryan






The bird walks down the beach along the glazed edge
The last wave reached. His each step makes a perfect stamp –
smallish, but as sharp as an emperor’s chop. Stride, stride,
goes the emperor down his wide mirrored promenade
the sea bows to repolish.

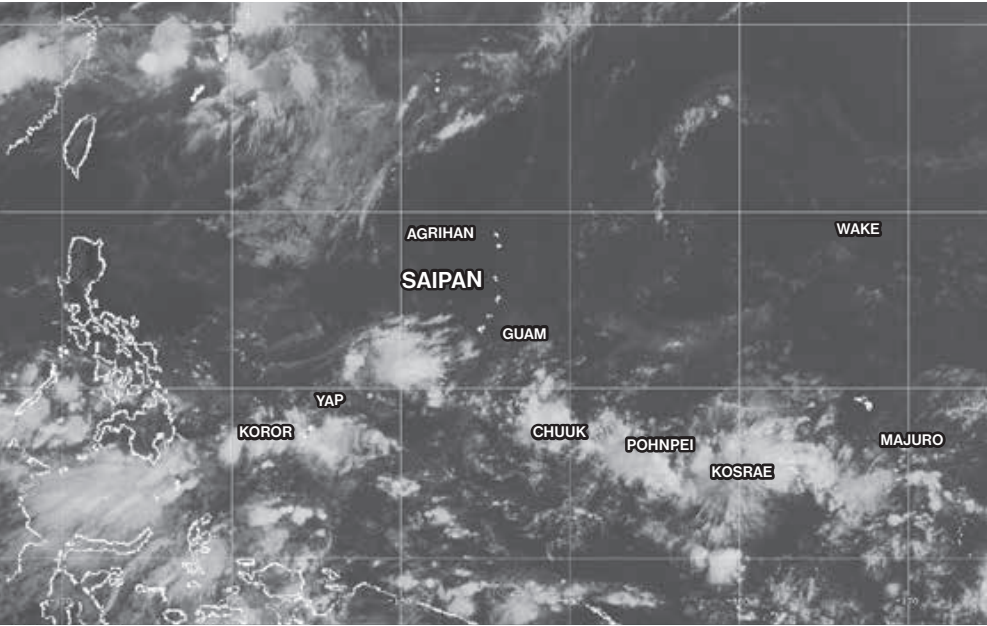
Shark’s Teeth

By Kay Ryan, 2005

Everything contains some silence. Noise gets its zest from
the small shark’s-tooth shaped fragments of rest angled in it.
An hour of city holds maybe a minute of these remnants of
a time when silence reigned, compact and dangerous as a shark.
Sometimes a bit of tail or fin can still be sensed in parks.

The Weather

5-DAY FORECAST FOR SAIPAN AND TINIAN									
TODAY		FRIDAY		SATURDAY		SUNDAY		MONDAY	
									
Isolated showers. Partly sunny		Mostly sunny		Mostly sunny		A chance of showers. Partly sunny		A chance of showers. Partly sunny	
88°	77°	88°	76°	88°	76°	88°	77°	88°	78°
YESTERDAY'S SATELLITE IMAGE									



PICTURE TIME: 8:02 AM, WEDNESDAY, JUNE 21, 2023

Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

Satellite shows partly sunny skies and isolated showers moving through the Marianas Waters this morning. The Ipan buoy reveals combined seas of around 4 feet, composed mainly of a northeast trade-wind swell and wind waves.

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

MICRONESIA			▲▼°F
Guam and Rota	Thunderstorms	87° / 80°	
Palau	Thunderstorms	82° / 77°	
Yap	Thunderstorms	85° / 79°	
Chuuk	Thunderstorms	84° / 78°	
Pohnpei	Showers	83° / 77°	
Kosrae	Showers	85° / 78°	
Majuro	Thunderstorms	86° / 81°	

DAY	SUNRISE	SUNSET
Today	5:48 AM	6:49 PM
Friday	5:48 AM	6:49 PM
Saturday	5:48 AM	6:50 PM
Sunday	5:48 AM	6:50 PM
Monday	5:48 AM	6:50 PM

DAY	MOONRISE	MOONSET	MOONRISE
Today	8:58 AM	10:09 PM	-
Friday	9:48 AM	10:46 PM	-
Saturday	10:36 AM	11:22 PM	-
Sunday	11:23 AM	11:55 PM	-
Monday	12:09 PM	-	-

AROUND THE GLOBE			▲▼°F
Auckland	Thunderstorms	59° / 54°	
Beijing	Mostly Sunny	103° / 73°	
Hong Kong	Thunderstorms	88° / 82°	
Honolulu	Sunny	85° / 75°	
London	Partly Cloudy	79° / 60°	
Los Angeles	Cloudy	77° / 59°	
Manila	Thunderstorms	92° / 79°	
Melbourne	Cloudy	54° / 46°	
Miami	Partly Cloudy	86° / 80°	
New York	Mostly Cloudy	75° / 61°	
Osaka	Rain	76° / 69°	
Paris	Rain	76° / 59°	
Busan	Showers	76° / 68°	
Rome	Partly Cloudy	100° / 72°	
Salem	Thunderstorms	77° / 67°	
San Francisco	Partly Cloudy	65° / 54°	
Seoul	Showers	81° / 66°	
Tokyo	Rain	72° / 67°	
Washington, DC	Rain	69° / 65°	

TIDES: SAIPAN HARBOR TODAY			FEET
4:49 AM	Low Tide	1.47	
8:56 AM	High Tide	1.82	
4:35 PM	Low Tide	0.05	
-	-	-	

FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF JUNE 1, 2023							
DEPARTURES				ARRIVALS			
SAIPAN-GUAM (GUM)				GUAM (GUM)-SAIPAN			
UA117	9:50AM	10:30AM	Daily	UA174	8:00AM	8:50AM	Daily
UA156	6:55PM	7:40PM	1, 4 effective June 5	UA112	5:00PM	5:50PM	1, 4 effective June 5
SAIPAN- NARITA (NRT)				NARITA (NRT)-SAIPAN			
UA824	7:25AM	9:55AM	1, 3, 5	UA825	9:25PM	1:50AM+1	2, 4, 7
GUAM-MANILA (MNL)				MANILA (MNL)-GUAM			
PR 111	5:55AM	7:55AM	Daily	UA184	10:25PM	4:25AM+1	1, 3, 4, 6, 7
UA193	6:55PM	10:55PM	2, 5 via Palau	UA189	10:25PM	6:10AM+1	2, 5 via Palau
UA183	7:15PM	9:10PM	Daily	PR110	10:30PM	4:25AM+1	Daily
				UA192	11:50PM	5:35AM+1	2, 5
SAIPAN-MANILA (MNL)				MANILA (MNL)-SAIPAN			
OZ626/703	4:20AM	10:35PM	1, 4, 5, 7 via ICN	UA184/174	10:25PM	8:45AM+1	1, 3, 4, 6,7 via Guam
UA117/183	9:50AM	9:10PM	Daily via Guam	UA192/174	10:25PM	8:45AM+1	2, 5 via Palau, Guam
UA117/193	9:50AM	10:55PM	2, 5 via Guam, Palau	UA184/174	11:50PM	8:45AM+1	2, 5 via Guam
SAIPAN-INCHEON (ICN)				INCHEON (ICN)-SAIPAN			
TW308	3:15AM	7:00AM	Daily	7C3406	9:30AM	3:10PM	Daily
OZ626	4:20AM	7:55AM	1, 4, 5, 7	TW307	8:30PM	2:15AM+1	Daily
7C3403	4:45AM	8:35AM	Daily	OZ625	9:25PM	2:55AM+1	3, 4, 6, 7
7C3405	4:10PM	7:45PM	Daily	7C3405	10:10PM	3:40AM+1	Daily

LEGEND: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); UA United Airlines; PR, Philippine Airlines; TW, T'Way Air; OZ, Asiana Airlines; 7C, Jeju Air; BX, Air Busan • ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. *(The Saipan Tribune is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)*

STAR MARIANAS AIR, INC.							
FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF JUNE 1, 2022							
SAIPAN TO ROTA				ROTA TO SAIPAN			
FLIGHT #	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY	FLIGHT #	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
1301	8:30	9:00	Daily	3101	9:30	10:00	Daily
1302	11:00	11:30	Mon/Wed/Fri	3102	13:00	13:30	Tues/Thurs/ Sat/Sun
1302	12:00	12:30	Tues/Thurs/ Sat/Sun	3102	14:00	14:30	Mon/Wed/Fri
1303	15:30	16:00	Daily	3103	16:30	17:00	Daily
ROTA TO GUAM				GUAM TO ROTA			
LIGHT #	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY	FLIGHT #	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
3401	12:00	12:30	Mon/Wed/Fri	4301	13:00	13:30	Mon/Wed/Fri
SAIPAN TO TINIAN				TINIAN TO SAIPAN			
FLIGHT #	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY	FLIGHT #	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
1202	8:00	8:15	Daily	2102	8:30	8:45	Daily
1203	9:00	9:15	Daily	2103	9:30	9:45	Daily
1204	10:00	10:15	Daily	2104	10:30	10:45	Daily
1208	14:00	14:15	Daily	2108	14:30	14:45	Daily
1209	15:00	15:15	Daily	2109	15:30	15:45	Daily
1210	16:00	16:15	Daily	2110	16:30	16:45	Daily
1211	17:00	17:15	Daily	2111	17:30	17:45	Daily

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SUBSCRIPTION Published Monday to Friday, Saipan Tribune offers door-to-door on-island delivery at an annual rate of \$180. For additional subscription information, call (670) 235-8747 or 235-2769, or fax 235-3740.

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Business

Pizza Hut reopens after renovation

By LEIGH GASES

leigh_gases@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Saipan Pizza Hut, which was temporarily closed for 10 days due to renovation, opened its doors to the public with brand-spanking new fixtures last May 11.

The newly renovated restaurant, which is located in the Gualo Rai Commercial Center, was beautifully touched up and is now an enhanced go-to place for everyone to enjoy hot and fresh pizza, pasta, wings, and desserts at an affordable price.

"Despite the current economic challenges, we are



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Saipan's Pizza Hut restaurant is sleek, with newly decorated interior, and lined with local artwork which welcome those dining in since its reopening last May 11.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

New fixtures and a new dining experience for Saipan Pizza Hut awaits those who have not yet set foot in its newly renovated restaurant.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Saipan Pizza Hut reopened last May 11 with a different look and feel that is sure to entice customers to dine-in and experience the newly renovated restaurant.

Grab slashes 1,000 jobs in biggest layoff since pandemic

HONG KONG (AP)—Singapore ride-hailing firm Grab Holdings said it is cutting over 1,000 jobs or 11% of its workforce to cut costs and keep the company competitive, in its biggest round of job cuts since the pandemic.

Grab CEO Anthony Tan said in a letter sent to employees late Tuesday that the job cuts were not a "shortcut to profitability" but part of a fundamental restructuring of its operating model and costs.

"The primary goal of this exercise is to strategically reorganize ourselves, so that we can move faster, work smarter, and rebalance our resources across our portfolio in line with our longer term strategies," Tan said, describing the restructure as a "painful but necessary step" for the longer term.

Grab's shares on NASDAQ were up more than 5% in pre-market trading, but declined nearly 1.5% midday.

The Singapore-based company started out as a taxi-hail-

ing service in Malaysia in 2012, before later expanding to ride-hailing, food delivery and financial services across eight countries in Southeast Asia, including Indonesia, Malaysia and the Philippines. In 2018, it acquired rival Uber's Southeast Asian operations after years of price wars to carve out market share.

Grab has been slower than other technology firms in the region in slashing jobs. The company initially said last September that it had no plans for massive job cuts.

Last year, Singapore-based gaming and online retail firm Sea Ltd., axed 7000 jobs or about 10% of its workforce. Grab's rival, Indonesian ride-hailing firm GoTo, had cut 12% of its workforce last year and cut another 600 jobs in March.

Although Grab reported a 130% rise in revenue to \$525 million for its quarter ended March, it also clocked a loss of \$250 million from the same time last year.

Grab is potentially grappling with slowing growth, amid higher inflation rates and costs of living, as well as stiff competition from rivals such as GoTo. Its gross merchandise value — which calculates the total dollar value of transactions by Grab users — rose just 3% for the quarter. Spending per user was down 4% compared to the same time last year.

In February, Grab brought forward its profitability goal, expecting to break even in the final quarter of 2023. It previously expected to turn profitable in the second half of 2024.

committed to serving this wonderful island community," said Cindy Julian, Pizza Hut director of Operations.

"Our customers and teams in Saipan are truly one-of-a-kind," she said. "We want Pizza Hut to be a gathering place for family and friends where they can enjoy amazing Pizza."

Customers can expect a sleek, beautiful dine-in location with updated furniture, window treatments, and local artwork.

Deiron Acoba, who ate there with his friends after the renovation, said that "it's brighter now and looks super clean. I don't mind dining in more often. It's a great look."

Mendiola-Long joins APAFS board of governors

HAGATNA, Guam—The Asia Pacific Association for Fiduciary Studies is pleased to announce that Phillip Mendiola-Long, chairman of the Marianas Public Land Trust, has joined the APAFS board of governors.

He assumed the position of Vianney Hocoq, MPLT chairman, Board of Trustees, upon completion of his term.

Involved in trade in the Asia Pacific Region for over 20 years, Mendiola-Long lives and works in the U.S. Pacific Islands just west of the Philippines.

Quaintly known as "the only U.S. City in Asia," the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands is a U.S. territory north of Guam which is just three-five hours away from the world's fastest-growing Asia Pacific Economies.

Appointed in 2009 by the U.S. Secretary of Commerce as a Hawaii/Pacific District Export Council representing the Western Pacific, Mendiola-Long has served three suc-

cessive terms and has been extremely successful in promoting U.S. Trade and Exports throughout the region.

Most recently, he is credited with establishing one of the U.S. Pacific's newest USCIS EB5 Regional Centers, the American Northern Marianas Regional Center which will fund Bridge Investment Group's 5-star hotel/resort project which is forecast to invest over \$140 million in foreign capital development and create over 4,000 jobs.

Mendiola-Long's career has been rich and diverse as he previously has been appointed to positions such as chief of staff and chief financial officer for a U.S. city, chairman of a \$100-million state trust fund, board member for a U.S. free trade zone, board member for a U.S. hospital, and is a former elected city councilman for the Municipality of Tinian and Aguiguan in the CNMI.

In 2019, Mendiola-Long

was appointed by the governor of the CNMI to serve as a board member on the State Board of Education. More recently, in 2023, Mendiola-Long was appointed by Gov. Arnold I/ Palacios and confirmed by the Senate as a trustee for the Marianas Public Land Trust for a six-year term.

Mendiola-Long was subsequently elected as MPLT's chair this year. In addition to his government service, Mendiola-Long served as the former CEO of Bridge Investment Group, LLC, and is currently the CEO and managing director of Sherman Consulting, LLC. Phillip Mendiola-Long joins a distinguished group of 18 fiduciaries of institutional funds from throughout the Asia Pacific region on the APAFS board, including Dr. Wildfred Leon Guerrero, chairman, board of trustees, Government of Guam Retirement Fund, APAFS board chairman; Dr.

Justin Agustines, who usually orders take out, said that he doesn't mind dining in now because of the new look of the restaurant. "It looks so sleek and I like the vibes. It's a good place to chill with my friends after a long day of doing errands or when we're just in the mood for pizza."

Marivic Pascual, who ate there with her family recently, said that the new restaurant looks nice. "It looks

nice. It reminds me of restaurants in the Philippines and it makes me feel like I'm not in a restaurant on Saipan."

Visit the newly renovated Saipan Pizza Hut at Gualo Rai Commercial Center to dine-in or carry-out. To order ahead or place a delivery order, call 670-235-9333. Hours of operation are Sunday through Thursday, 10am-10pm, and Friday through Saturday, 10am-11pm.

Patrick Tellei, Ed.D., president of Palau Community College, APAFS board vice chairman; Anna Mendiola, AIF, president, FSM Development Bank, APAFS board secretary; and, Raaj Kurapati, AIFA, CFO, University of Memphis, APAFS board treasurer.

APAFS (www.apafs.org) is a Guam-based 501c3 association whose membership includes institutional investment funds throughout the Pacific Region. Its mission is to promote prudent stewardship and leadership through fiduciary education and to lead advocacy efforts on behalf of its membership. The organization recently celebrated its 20th anniversary. Annually, APAFS hosts a week-long educational conference in Manila. Notable keynote speakers have included, Fareed Zakaria (CNN host and commentator), Mark Mobius (former Executive Chairman of Templeton), and Marc Faber (author and Swiss investor living in Thailand). (PR)



Mendiola-Long

Twitter employees sue social media company over bonuses

Employees are suing Twitter over tens of millions of dollars in bonuses they say the social media company failed to pay despite promises it would.

The lawsuit filed Tuesday in federal court in San Francisco claims that in the month's leading up to billionaire Elon Musk's acquisition of the company, executives including former finance chief Ned Segal "repeatedly" promised employees that 50% of their 2022 bonuses would be paid.

The lead plaintiff, Mark Schobinger, served as Twitter's senior director of com-

pensation until last month. Lawyers for the plaintiff are seeking class action status on behalf of current and former Twitter employees. Shannon Liss-Riordan, an attorney for the plaintiffs, said the bonuses Twitter owes are in the "tens of millions of dollars."

Twitter, which has disbanded its media relations team, did not respond to a message for comment other than with an automated reply. The company is facing multiple lawsuits from former employees as well as over unpaid rent and other unpaid bills. (AP)

Nation

Democrats downplay Hunter Biden's plea deal

NEW YORK (AP)—Democrats, already anxious about President Joe Biden's reelection prospects, are seeking to downplay—or ignore altogether—revelations that the president's son has entered into a plea deal with federal prosecutors over tax offenses and a gun charge.

And as Democrats dodge, former President Donald Trump and his Republican allies seized on the extraordinary legal development to tighten his grip on the GOP and deflect from his own legal shortcomings.

But in a nation deeply divided and with voters from both parties firmly entrenched in their political outlook, there were few signs immediately after Hunter Biden's plea deal was announced on Tuesday that the unprecedented prosecution of a president's son had shifted the 2024 presidential election in any significant way.

In conversations with The Associated Press, some of the elected Democratic officials best positioned to challenge Biden for the party's presidential nomination reaffirmed their decisions not to run in 2024. And while party officials did not rush to support the president publicly, they privately described the development as a minor political distraction—at



President Joe Biden talks with California Gov. Gavin Newsom as he arrives at Moffett Federal Airfield, Calif., Monday, June 19, 2023.

most—that could linger into next year's general election.

The Biden campaign declined to comment. At a summit on artificial intelligence in San Francisco on Tuesday, Biden smiled when asked if he's spoken to Hunter. "I'm very proud of my son," he said.

For now, veteran Democrat-

ic strategist Stephanie Cutter suggested that Hunter Biden's prosecution "is not on most Americans' radar."

"But to the extent it is, it shows that no one is above the law and what taking responsibility looks like, which in itself is a sharp contrast to the former president," Cutter said,

referencing Trump's legal entanglements. "The MAGA echo chamber will continue to obsess over Hunter as they have for years, but those aren't President Biden's voters, and nothing changes in terms of his strategy for reelection."

Hunter Biden, 53, will plead

guilty to the misdemeanor tax offenses as part of an agreement made public Tuesday. Under the agreement, he will avoid prosecution on a felony charge of illegally possessing a firearm as a drug user, as long as he adheres to conditions set by prosecutors.

The deal ends a long-running Justice Department investigation into Biden's younger son, who has acknowledged struggling with addiction following the 2015 death of his brother, Beau. It also averts a trial that would have generated distracting headlines for a first-term president just beginning to focus on the 2024 election.

Already, two high-profile Democrats with national ambitions have reaffirmed their support for the president's reelection bid since the plea deal came to light.

"Hunter changes nothing," California Gov. Gavin Newsom said Tuesday. He told the AP over the weekend that "not on God's green earth" would he run against Biden.

"My decision has not changed," Democratic Rep. Ro Khanna of California said of his own decision not to primary Biden. He has been a frequent presence in recent months in early presidential primary states like New Hampshire and Nevada.

That's not to say Democrats are excited about Biden's reelection bid.

Only about 1 in 3 Democrats want the 80-year-old president to seek a second term, according to a poll conducted in February by The Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research.

Families push for full school days for children with disabilities

GRANTS PASS, Ore. (AP)—One Thursday morning in May, instead of sitting at a desk in her sixth grade classroom in the Oregon mountains, Khloe Warne sat at a table in her mother's bakery, doing her schoolwork on a laptop and watching her favorite clips of anime.

Khloe, 12, loves drawing, writing and especially reading — in second grade, she was already reading at a sixth grade level. But she only goes to school one day a week for two hours. The district said she needed shorter school days last year when Khloe threw a desk and fought with students in outbursts her mother attributes to a failure to support her needs. Khloe, who has been diagnosed with autism, ADHD and an anxiety disorder, had no individualized education plan for her disability when she returned to in-person learning after the pandemic.

Not being able to attend school regularly has saddened Khloe, stunted her education and isolated her from her peers, her mother says. It

has also upended her family's life. Her mother, Alyssa Warne, had to quit her job for a time in order to stay home with her. She described the fight to get her daughter back in the classroom as exhausting, stressful and sad.

"She just wants a friend," Alyssa Warne said. "It's not asking much to send your kid to school for at least one whole day."

Across the U.S., advocates say, schools are removing students with disabilities from the classroom, often in response to challenging behavior, by sending them home or cutting back on the days they're allowed to attend.

Schools say the move can be necessary to keep students and teachers safe and prevent disturbances. But parents and advocates argue the shortened days, often referred to as informal removals, amount to discrimination and violations of students' civil rights. Under federal law, it is illegal to bar a child from receiving the same education as their peers based on conditions stemming from their disability.

Alyssa Warne sued her daughter's school and school district this month, alleging disability discrimination. School officials did not respond to requests for comment on the lawsuit. In an earlier email, the school director said she couldn't comment on individual students because of privacy concerns.

In Oregon, a clash between parents and schools culminated this spring at the Statehouse. A bill to curb the use of shortened days, essentially giving parents veto power over such a decision, is pending in the House of Representatives after near-unanimous passage in the Senate. Pressure from school boards and superintendents has hurt the legislation's chances, its chief sponsor said.

"It shouldn't have been controversial because these kids have had this right for such a long time," Democratic state Sen. Sara Gelser Blouin said of her bill. "I wish that we could serve these kids, respect these kids and lift these kids up and honor their rights without being ordered by a court to do so."

House GOP calls on Trump-era special counsel who studied the Russia probe

WASHINGTON (AP)—As Donald Trump faces a 37-count federal indictment and the possibility of a lengthy prison sentence if convicted, House Republicans are using a special counsel's report to renew their argument that federal law enforcement is tainted by political bias.

John Durham, who recently completed his report on the FBI's investigation of Trump's 2016 campaign, will testify Wednesday before the House Judiciary Committee. That's one day after Durham met behind closed doors with members of the House Intelligence Committee.

While Durham produced just three prosecutions—with two acquittals—in a four-year investigation, his report highlighted FBI agents withholding key information from judges and contended the bureau disregarded reasons not to investigate Trump's campaign.

Republicans who control the House say they're still angry about the 2016 campaign probe, known as "Crossfire

Hurricane," and intend to push new curbs on the FBI in exchange for renewing surveillance powers known as Section 702 that U.S. intelligence considers critical and that expire at the end of this year. Many Democrats also want new rules on what access the FBI has to search foreign surveillance data for information about U.S. citizens and companies.

GOP animosity toward the Justice Department was further fueled by Tuesday's announcement that President Joe Biden's son Hunter will likely avoid jail time in a plea deal on tax and gun allegations. Republican Rep. Jim Jordan of Ohio, who chairs the Judiciary Committee, tweeted, in all caps, that it was a "double standard of justice."

Durham was appointed by former Attorney General William Barr to review the origins of the investigation into ties between Russia and Trump's 2016 campaign.

He concluded that the FBI acted too hastily and without sufficient justification to

launch a full investigation and asserted the bureau showed more caution on allegations that former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton mishandled classified information on her private email server.

He also said the FBI cited the so-called Steele dossier before the primary U.S. surveillance court even after investigators failed to corroborate "a single substantive allegation" within it. The Clinton campaign partially funded creation of the dossier and agreed last year with the Democratic National Committee to pay a \$113,000 fine for misreporting campaign spending on research.

The Durham report yielded only one conviction — a guilty plea from a little-known FBI employee — and the only two other cases that were brought both ended in acquittals at trial.

And though Durham accused the FBI of confirmation bias, he did not allege that political bias or partisanship were guiding factors for the FBI's actions.

Environment

World well short of pace needed to meet UN's 2030 goals

By MELINA WALLING
Associated Press

The world is falling well short of the progress needed to meet the United Nations' sustainable development goals by 2030 in areas ranging from poverty to clean energy to biodiversity, with a growing gap between wealthy and developing nations, according to a report Tuesday from the nonprofit tracking the goals.

The coronavirus pandemic stalled the limited progress made in the years after United Nations member states adopted the goals in 2015. Now, halfway through the 15-year time frame, not a single one of the goals is on target to be met.

"We're at the risk of a lost decade for sustainable development," said Guillaume Lafortune, a lead author of the report and vice president and head of the Paris office of the Sustainable Development Solutions Network, the nonprofit launched by the UN to foster and track sustainable development. "And there's actually a risk that the gap between rich and poor countries on sustainable development might be bigger in 2030 than it was in 2015."

The goals, which the authors described as "an ethical imperative," cover a range of areas, including threats to the climate and environment but also basic human rights such as food, health and education.

The authors noted that goals for reducing hunger, improving health and protecting biodiversity are particularly off-track. They said changing global governance mechanisms and global finance architecture are critical for improving progress on all the goals.

Lafortune pointed to the global finance summit that opens Thursday in Paris as an important moment for the world. A main focus of the summit is how international finance can be reformed to help the developing nations that are often most vulnerable to climate change but least able to raise capital for things like transitioning to renewable energy.

The report analyzed countries' progress on the sustainability goals by assigning them scores from zero to 100. They examined factors like poverty, hunger, disease, carbon dioxide emissions, subjective well-being scores and dozens of other indicators. Finland, Sweden, Denmark, Germany and Austria ranked highest. South Sudan ranked lowest, followed by the Central African Republic, Chad, Yemen and Somalia.

Lafortune called particular attention to the "disappointing" United States scorecard, which he said was below average for developed countries. He said the U.S. was one of the worst performers in terms of its commitment efforts and was one of only five mem-

ber countries that did not present action plans and priorities to the international community. But Lafortune did note that some U.S. cities voluntarily provided local reviews.

Kimberly Marion Suiseeya, an associate professor of political science and environmental policy and culture at Northwestern University who did not work on the report, said that while she sees pressing global development shortfalls on issues like the climate emergency, she thinks the Biden administration is taking climate seriously. She also saw signs of optimism in China's progress on renewable energy. Though the country ranked below the U.S. in the report, it has invested more in clean energy, according to research firm BloombergNEF.

Anita Ramasastry, a law professor and director of the Sustainable International Development graduate program at the University of Washington, said she wasn't surprised that the sustainable development goals are off track. Ramasastry, who had no part in the report, said she doesn't think many governments with more advanced economies, like the U.S., have embraced the goals or made them relevant to citizens' daily lives.

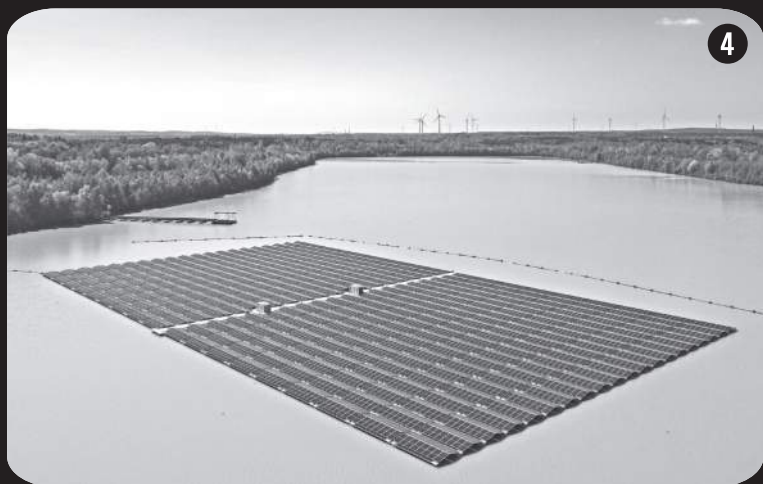
She questioned whether the goals were overly ambitious and added that it will be important to examine how the 203 agenda is financed, as well as the role of the private sector.

"Business has been asked to fill a role. And I think there's just an ultimate question, which is should we have asked business to fill that role?" she asked. "Because ultimately the SDGs are meant to be about governments and states."

The report made the same point repeatedly, singling out several "basic failures" in global governance. Those included voluntary implementation of the goals with no enforcement mechanisms when countries fall short, international trade and finance rules not geared to sustainability, and national governments not coordinating well with smaller units of government on the goals.

Lafortune called for countries to keep the sustainable development goals in mind as they approach the Paris summit and other global conferences. He said Paris has the opportunity to act as an "accelerator" toward reforming international institutions like the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank, which he sees as possible elements of a global strategy for investment in tackling climate change and other sustainable development goals.

"Despite all the fragmentation right now in geopolitics, the many crises and so on, we still need to keep that sort of long-term vision and this idea of multilateralism and global cooperation alive. I think this is absolutely crucial," Lafortune said. "I don't think the world will be better off if we just forget about these goals because we won't achieve them."



① Wind turbines turn behind a solar farm in Rapshagen, Germany, Oct. 28, 2021. ② A malnourished two year-old sits by his mother, left, who was recently displaced by drought, at a malnutrition stabilization center run by Action against Hunger, in Mogadishu, Somalia, June 5, 2022. ③ Somalis displaced by drought wait in line to fill jerrycans with water distributed by the Norwegian Refugee Council, on the outskirts of Baidoa, in Somalia, Oct. 29, 2022. ④ Solar panels on Germany's biggest floating photovoltaic plant produce energy under a blue sky on a lake in Haltern, Germany, May 3, 2022. ⑤ Somalis, who have been displaced due to drought, settle at a camp on the outskirts of Dollow, Somalia, Sept. 19, 2022.

Life & Style

Social media star charged with rape, human trafficking in Romania

BUCHAREST, Romania (AP)—Andrew Tate, a social media personality known for expressing misogynistic views online, was charged in Romania with rape, human trafficking and forming a criminal gang to exploit women, prosecutors said Tuesday.

Prosecutors also filed charges against Tate's brother, Tristan, and two Romanian women in a court in Bucharest, Romania's capital, the nation's anti-organized crime agency said.



Tate

In a statement, the Directorate for Investigating Organized Crime and Terrorism alleged the four defendants formed a criminal group in 2021 "in order to commit the crime of human trafficking" in Romania as well as the United States and Britain.

The agency alleged that seven female victims were misled

and transported to Romania, where they were sexually exploited and subjected to physical violence by the gang. One defendant is accused of raping a woman twice in March 2022, according to the statement.

Tate, 36, has resided in Romania since 2017. The former professional kickboxer has repeatedly claimed Romanian prosecutors have no evidence and alleged the case is a political conspiracy designed to silence him.

Tate's spokesperson, Ma-

tea Petrescu, said Tuesday that the brothers were prepared to "demonstrate their innocence and vindicate their reputation." The two men are expected to attend a hearing in Bucharest on Wednesday morning, she added.

"Tate's legal team are prepared to cooperate fully with the appropriate authorities, presenting all necessary evidence to exonerate the brothers and expose any misinterpretations or false accusations," Petrescu said.

Under Romanian law, a judge has up to 60 days to assess the files in the case before defendants are sent to trial.

The Tate brothers, who are dual British-U.S. citizens, and the two Romanian suspects were detained in late Decem-

ber in Bucharest. The brothers won an appeal on March 31 to be moved from police custody to house arrest.

At the time, Tate was a hugely successful social media figure with more than 6 million Twitter followers, many of them young men and schoolchildren. He previously was banned from TikTok, YouTube and Facebook for hate speech and his misogynistic comments, including that women should bear responsibility for getting sexually assaulted.

He returned to Twitter last year after the platform's new CEO, Elon Musk, reinstated Tate's account. Hope Not Hate, a group campaigning against far-right extremism in the U.K., has warned that Tate continues to attract a huge fol-

lowing among young men and teenage boys who are drawn to his "misogynist, homophobic and racist content" by the luxurious lifestyle the influencer projects online.

Romania's anti-organized crime agency, known as DII-COT, said the seven alleged victims were recruited with false declarations of love and taken to Romania's Ilfov county, where they were forced to take part in pornography. The women were allegedly controlled by "intimidation, constant surveillance" and claims they were in debt, prosecutors said.

Prosecutors ordered the confiscation of the Tate brothers' assets, including 15 luxury cars, luxury watches and about \$3 million in cryptocurrency, the agency's statement said.

Dr. Dre to receive first Hip-Hop Icon Award

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Dr. Dre will need to make room in his trophy case for another prestigious award.

The American Society of Composers, Authors and Publishers said on Tuesday that Dr. Dre will receive the first-ever ASCAP Hip-Hop Icon Award. He'll be honored at the organization's Rhythm & Soul Music Awards Celebration of 50 Years of Hip-Hop on Thursday in Los Angeles.

"Dr. Dre's groundbreaking early work laid a foundation



Dr. Dre

for hip-hop as we know it today," Paul Williams, chairman of the board and president at ASCAP. "As a champion for some of today's biggest artists and a successful entrepreneur, he changed the culture around hip-hop."

The honor Dre is receiving will be presented to ASCAP members whose musical con-

tributions have made an "indelible impact" on the art and culture of hip-hop.

DJ Kid Capri and DJ Drama will provide music for Thursday's event.

Dre, a seven-time Grammy winner, has produced big hits for Jay-Z, Eminem, Snoop Dogg, Gwen Stefani, Kendrick Lamar, Nas and 50 Cent. He won his first Emmy for last year's Super Bowl halftime performance with Eminem, Mary J. Blige, Snoop Dogg, Lamar and 50 Cent.

Search for actor missing on Calif. mountain unsuccessful

SAN BERNARDINO, Calif. (AP)—A weekend search for long-missing actor Julian Sands on Southern California's massive Mount Baldy was unsuccessful, authorities said.

Sands was reported missing in January after setting out to hike on Mount Baldy, which rises more than 10,000



Sands

feet (3,048 meters) east of Los Angeles and was pounded by severe storms during winter.

The San Bernardino County Sheriff's Department said the latest

search was conducted Saturday by more than 80 search-and-rescue volunteers and deputies, two helicopters and drone crews.

Search teams were flown into remote areas and drones were used to search areas inaccessible to ground crews, the department said in a statement.

Ex-CNN producer sentenced to more than 19 years for luring 9-year-old into sex acts

BURLINGTON, Vt. (AP)—A former CNN television producer who had pleaded guilty to luring a 9-year-old girl into illegal sexual acts was sentenced Tuesday to more than 19 years in prison and an additional 15 years of supervised release during a U.S. District Court hearing in Vermont.

John Griffin of Stamford, Connecticut, pleaded guilty in federal court in December to using interstate commerce to entice and coerce the girl to engage in sexual activity at his Vermont ski house.

As part of the 2022 plea deal, the government dropped



Griffin

two remaining counts of enticement of a minor against Griffin, then 45 year old.

Griffin had initially pleaded not guilty in 2021. He has been ordered to pay restitution to the victims.

According to the plea deal, Griffin met a woman on a website during the summer of 2020 and persuaded the woman to bring her daughter to his Ludlow, Vermont, ski home for sexual activity.

Griffin paid the woman

and girl to fly from Nevada to Boston, picked them up and drove them to his Vermont home where the girl said Griffin sexually assaulted her, court records say.

Griffin was arrested on Dec. 10, 2021, a day after he was indicted by a grand jury. He worked for CNN for about eight years but was fired after he was arrested, according to the network.

He also cannot have contact with people under the age of 18, except in the presence of an adult who has been approved by a probation officer, and is prohibited from being in areas where children congregate, such as schools, playgrounds and theme parks, unless approved by the probation office beforehand.

Life with younger mistress appeals to unhappy husband

DEAR ABBY: I met my wife in college. We have been married for 40 years and have two adult sons. My wife had a brief affair early in our marriage, but we have long since moved on from that. However, increasingly over the last 15 years, my wife (career homemaker, her choice) has been aggressively making demands in exchange for anything she does for me -- i.e., if I don't buy her something, she won't cook dinner, do laundry or have sex.

I buy her things all the time, and I give her an allowance, roughly 70% of my take-home pay. Some of her demands I simply cannot afford, so I often cook, clean, etc., myself. As a result, we haven't had sex in more than 10 years.

Two years ago, I met a younger woman. She is also married, although separated. She still shares a home with her husband and their two children. We meet as often as we can and I find her delightful and easy to get along with. Lately, she has been saying she wants us to leave our situations and get married.

My concern is twofold. First, when my wife gets angry, she threatens to divorce me and take everything I've got, even if it costs her everything as well. She does not bluff. Second, my girlfriend is so much younger than I am that I'm concerned that while things are great now, I'll be an elderly man in the not too distant future and could be a burden to her. What are your thoughts?

AT A CROSSROADS

DEAR "CROSSROADS": From what you have writ-

ten, it appears your marriage has essentially been over for many years. If the only thing keeping you in this unhappy marriage is fear, contact an attorney to discuss what a divorce would cost you financially. Whether you should then "rescue" this delightful, much younger woman from her unhappy marriage is a separate issue.

Because you are older, are you physically and emotionally ready and able to help her raise her children? Is she aware that, in addition to her children, she might also at some point have to become YOUR caregiver? Please do not jump from the frying pan into the fire. These are important questions that may take some time to resolve.

■ ■ ■

DEAR ABBY: A few months after I returned to work from maternity leave, a co-worker mentioned that our boss's father had died while I was away. How should I handle this? My boss hasn't said anything about it. I'd feel weird expressing my sympathies verbally six months later. Should I just leave a card on his desk?

To further complicate matters, my boss's younger brother has started working at the company. Would I get him a card too? I have only known him a couple of months, as compared to my boss of almost 10 years.

UNSURE IN GEORGIA

DEAR UNSURE: Whether it's with a card or a simple note, it would be thoughtful to tell your boss you were in-

DEAR ABBY

BY ABIGAIL VAN BUREN
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Contact Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.



formed by a co-worker that his father had passed away during your maternity leave, and you would like to express your sympathy. You could send a card addressed to his home without it being disruptive at the business.

As to what to do about expressing your sympathy to his brother—in light of the fact that you have known him only a short time, offer condolences verbally if the opportunity presents itself.

■ ■ ■

To receive a collection of Abby's most memorable -- and most frequently requested -- poems and essays, send your name and mailing address, plus check or money order for \$8 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby -- Keepers Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Shipping and handling are included in the price.)

Pastimes

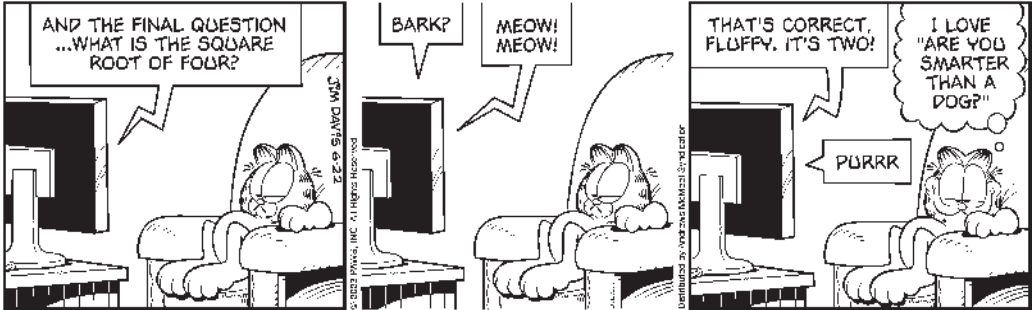
Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson



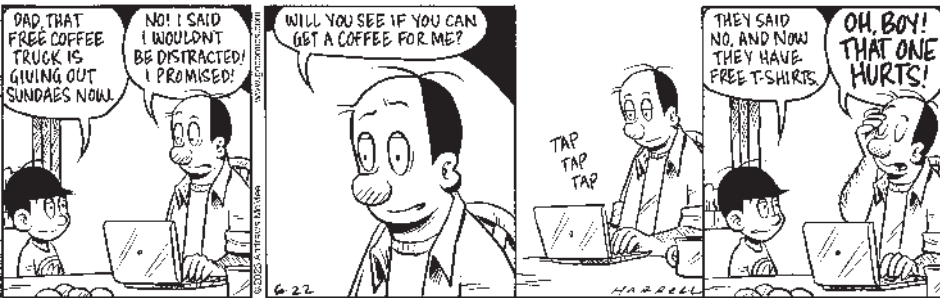
Garfield®

By Jim Davis



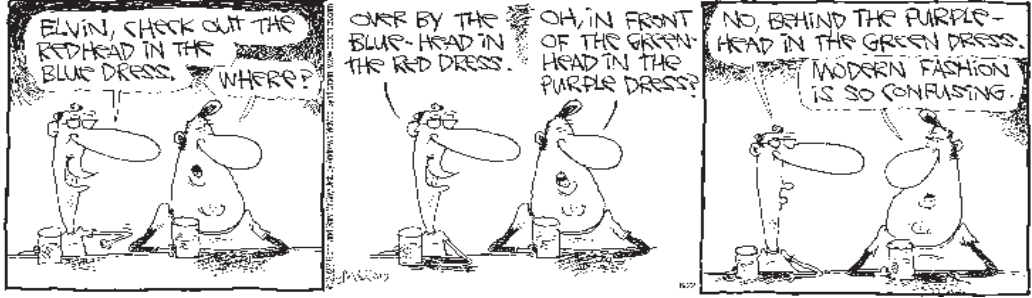
Adam@home

By Bryan Basset



The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy



CROSSWORD

By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS

1 Muppet eagle
4 Fluttery insect
8 Latin love
12 Promising words?
13 "... sting like —"
14 Timber wolf
15 Free-loading
17 Hosp. scans
18 Tokyo-based carrier
19 Lease signers
21 Chopin pieces
24 Author Deighton
25 MLB stat
26 Piratic potation
28 Packs down
32 Mexican entree
34 Red-carpet type
36 Geezer
37 Upright
39 Agra's — Mahal
41 Flamenco cheer
42 Up to

DOWN

1 — card (cell phone insert)
4 Cock's "Rear —"
6 Brunch cocktails
10 — chi
12 Lunar light
14 Alpha-betic sequence
16 Tennis legend
18 Tree fluid
20 Back talk
22 Optimistic
24 Kids' game
26 Ruckus
28 Milk, to kids
30 Composer Gustav
32 Kimono sash
34 Circus sight
36 German philosopher
38 Fact book
40 Early period
42 Last writes?
44 Colonial flag-maker
46 Scoundrel
48 Mosquito barrier
50 Deco artist
52 Slope transport
54 Minivan alter-native
56 Cam-bridge sch.
58 Most sullen
60 Casual shirt
62 Leftovers recipe
64 Sea creature with arms
66 Furry foot
68 — the season
70 Small bus
72 Truman's birthplace
74 Apprehend
76 Earth's neighbor
78 "In-secure" star Rae
80 Yoga class pads
82 Mediocre cries
84 Surprised
86 Small battery
88 Fuel stat

Solution time: 24 mins.

Yesterday's answer 6-22

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY:

Carson Daly, 50; Cyndi Lauper, 70; Meryl Streep, 74; Todd Rundgren, 75.

Happy Birthday: Stick close to home and family. Don't allow outsiders to twist your words or interfere with your plans. It's important to stay grounded and to maintain balance and equality in your life. Too much of anything will leave you in a vulnerable position. Change what's necessary and make the most of what you have. Pay attention to your health and happiness. A minimalist attitude will serve you well. Your numbers are 5, 14, 21, 29, 33, 42, 45.

ARIES (March 21-April 19): Engage in something that makes you happy and incorporate it into your everyday routine. Keep your mind on what's important to you, and choose people who share your idea of a good time. A romantic gesture will offer insight into new lifestyle possibilities. ★★★★★

TAURUS (April 20-May 20): Sort out your intentions before you act or say something you regret. Taking care of yourself and your finances will be necessary if someone pushes you to try to do something that isn't in your budget or is a risk to your health. ★★

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): A domestic project will cost more than anticipated. Budget wisely and cancel your plans rather than go into debt. Talk through possibilities with those your plans will affect, and use the input you receive as a guideline. ★★★★★

CANCER (June 21-July 22): Lean into whatever job you have and make your mark. If you let your imagination

lead the way, you'll devise a plan to help you march to the front of any competition you encounter. Be realistic and honest with others. ★★★★★

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): It's nice to be generous, but don't feel like you have to pay for others. Look in the mirror and consider a makeover. An emotional situation will spin out of control if not dealt with properly. Consistency will count when it comes to love. ★★★★★

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): Look at the possibilities and turn any negativity you face into something positive. Your attitude will make a difference in the way others treat you. A trip or new venue will be uplifting and fill your head with exciting, prosperous ideas. ★★★★★

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): Connect with people who bring out the best in you. A brainstorming session will confirm your next move, put your mind at ease and encourage you to press forward by yourself. A trendy look will draw attention. Romance is in the stars. ★★★★★

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): Do whatever it takes to avoid a conflict. Put your energy to better use by developing an idea or starting a project to improve your living space, routine or something you want to pursue. Don't let emotional drama bring you down. ★★

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): You'll attract attention. Mix and mingle with people who share your interests; something good will transpire. A trip, course or physical activity will bring you closer to a plan that offers hope for a brighter future.

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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Romance is favored. ★★★★★

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): You can move, change your lifestyle or exit a situation dragging you down. Maintain your reputation by being upfront about the way you feel and what you plan to do next. Honesty will be respected and reciprocated. ★★★★★

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): Choose intelligence over emotion, and refuse to let anyone disrupt your plans. Walk away from unreliable people and situations, and concentrate on simplifying your life. A clear head and less negativity will set you on a better path. Self-improvement is favored. ★★★★★

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): Don't fuss; do what's necessary and get on with your day. A responsible attitude will be noticed and rewarded. Changing how you manage or earn your cash will bring high returns. Check facts before passing information along. ★★★★★

Birthday Baby: You are passionate, encouraging and active. You are innovative and disciplined.

★ Avoid conflicts; work behind the scenes. ★★ You can accomplish, but don't rely on others. ★★★ Focus and you'll reach your goals. ★★★★★ Aim high; start new projects. ★★★★★ Nothing can stop you; go for gold.

SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku

By Dave Green

Difficulty: ★★★

6/22

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Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Yesterday's Answer

Difficulty: ★★★

6/21

STUMPED?

For answers to today's crossword, call 1-800-226-5955! 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

WONDERWORD®

By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally and even backward. Find them, circle each letter of the word and strike it off the list. The leftover letters spell the WONDERWORD.

LEBRON JAMES — NBA SCORING CHAMP! Solution: 8 letters

Y B E A T S E L E G N A S O L
N R S N O S A E S R E K A L R
N Y O A S K I R E K I N A E I
O C B C R M L L N N H B R M R
R E O I E V S O G A T O A R A
B U L P I P R O N E C I T A Y
A G Z M L K L N K S M D N C O
N A H Y A D A S M E I O E C O
A E U L V V A A D H N M C O N
N L R O A B J A T E U I N L E
A B I S C E L A R A T N I E N
B H A O C H R I S T E A V A A
O S U A L L T I M E S N T D Y
A R P O I N T S L A E T S E W
T S E T A E R G F O R W A R D

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Akron, All Time, Banana Boat, Basketball, Beats, Bronny, Bryce, Carmelo, Cavaliers, Chris, Cool, Court, Dominant, Dwyane, Erik, Forward, Gold, Greatest, Heat, King, Lakers, Leader, League, Lobos, Los Angeles, Medal, Miami, Minutes, MVP, NBA, Nike, Ohio, Olympic, Points, Raymone, Savannah, Scorer, Seasons, Space Jam, Steals, St. Vincent, Zhuri
Yesterday's Answer: Revolve
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Hicks drives in 4 runs as Orioles beat AL East-leading Rays



ST. PETERSBURG, Fla.

(AP)—Aaron Hicks homered and had four RBIs as the Baltimore Orioles beat the Tampa Bay Rays 8-6 after nearly blowing a seven-run lead Tuesday night in a matchup of the top two teams in the AL East.

Anthony Santander and Ryan O'Hearn also went deep, and Kyle Bradish (3-3) gave up two runs and four hits over five innings for the Orioles, who moved within four games of the first-place Rays. Félix Bautista, the fifth Baltimore reliever, got four outs to earn his 20th save on his 28th birthday.

Francisco Mejía had an RBI double off Bradish during a two-run fifth before Manuel Margot drove in two with a pinch-hit single in a four-run sixth against three Baltimore relievers as the Rays got within 7-6.

Tampa Bay dropped to 31-8 at home and has lost three straight overall. The Rays entered as the only team in the majors without a three-game skid this year.

Baltimore's Austin Hays, who started the day leading the AL in batting, went 3 for 4 and raised his average from .320 to .327. He has a career-high streak of five multiple-hit games.

Hicks made it 4-0 with his three-run homer off Tyler Glasnow (2-1).

REDS 8, ROCKIES 6

CINCINNATI (AP)—TJ Friedl had a three-run homer on a four-hit night, rookie Elly De La Cruz added a solo shot and Cincinnati extended its winning streak to 10 games while handing Colorado its seventh straight loss.

Will Benson hit a solo homer in the sixth, helping the NL Central-leading Reds to their longest winning streak since 2012, when they also won 10 straight. De La Cruz had three hits as fans chanted "Elly! Elly!"

Alex Young (2-0), the second of six Cincinnati pitchers, worked a perfect fifth for the victory. Alexis Díaz allowed a run before escaping a bases-loaded jam his 20th save in 20 opportunities.

Noah Davis (0-2) gave up five runs in four innings. Jorge Alfaro hit a three-run homer in the eighth for the Rockies.

GIANTS 4, PADRES 3

SAN FRANCISCO (AP)—Joc Pederson hit a tying home run in the eighth inning and drew the winning walk in the ninth against San Diego's

Josh Hader as San Francisco won its ninth straight.

Luis Matos drew a one-out walk off Nick Martinez (3-3). Patrick Bailey followed with a single to left. Hader replaced Martinez and walked pinch-hitter Casey Schmitt after being called for a pitch-clock violation. Hader struck out David Villar before Pederson drew a seven-pitch walk.

Thairo Estrada doubled and scored for the Giants, whose winning streak is their longest since 2021. Tyler Rogers (2-4) retired three batters for the victory.

Fernando Tatis Jr. hit his 15th homer for the Padres and finished with three hits.

DODGERS 2, ANGELS 0

ANAHEIM, Calif. (AP)—Miguel Rojas doubled and scored on Michael Busch's high-bouncing single in the eighth after Clayton Kershaw and Reid Detmers dueling through seven scoreless innings, and the Dodgers beat the Angels in the Free-way Series opener.

Will Smith added an RBI single in the eighth for the Dodgers, who snapped their three-game skid.

Four innings after the Angels' Brandon Drury was ruled out at the plate on a call overturned by video review, Busch's chopper off Chris Devenski (3-2) inexplicably leaped high over new Angels first baseman Kevin Padlo.

Kershaw (9-4) has thrown 22 consecutive scoreless innings at Angel Stadium.

Caleb Ferguson struck out Shohei Ohtani and Mike Trout in the eighth, and Evan Phillips pitched the ninth for his eighth save.

YANKEES 3, MARINERS 1

NEW YORK (AP)—Gerrit Cole stared down José Caballero and wagged a finger at Seattle's dugout 15 times after striking out the side in the seventh inning as New York snapped a four-game skid.

Cole's finger-wagging was a pointed response to repeated step-outs by Caballero. The Yankees' ace got Caballero swinging on a full-count fastball in the seventh.

Cole (8-1) allowed one run and four hits in 7 1/3 innings with eight strikeouts and a walk. He is 4-0 with a 1.87 ERA following a Yankees loss this season, and New York is 7-0 in those starts.

Clay Holmes got five straight outs for his ninth save in 11 chances.

Anthony Rizzo had an RBI double off the right-field wall in the first against George



Baltimore Orioles' Aaron Hicks (34) celebrates with third base coach Tony Mansolino (36) after his three-run home run off Tampa Bay Rays starting pitcher Tyler Glasnow during the first inning of a baseball game Tuesday, June 20, 2023, in St. Petersburg, Fla.

Kirby (6-6), and Billy McKinney hit a 432-foot, two-run homer in the second.

ASTROS 4, METS 2

HOUSTON (AP)—Alex Bregman hit a two-run homer and Framber Valdez threw eight strong innings to outpitch former teammate Justin Verlander as Houston beat New York to snap a five-game skid.

Valdez (7-5) didn't allow a baserunner until the sixth and held the Mets scoreless until the eighth. His 2.27 ERA ranks second in the majors. Ryan Pressly pitched a scoreless ninth for his 13th save.

The Astros led by one in the third before Bregman connected off Verlander (2-4) for the 150th home run of his career to make it 3-0. Verlander allowed four runs in seven innings in his first meeting with his former team.

BRAVES 4, PHILLIES 2

PHILADELPHIA (AP)—Spencer Strider struck out nine over six innings in his first start in Philadelphia since last year's postseason implosion, and Austin Riley and Matt Olson homered for Atlanta.

Strider (8-2) nimbly pitched out of jams until the fifth and helped the Braves win their seventh straight. Raisel Iglesias gave up a run in the ninth but struck out Kyle Schwarber with the tying run on base to pick up his 10th save.

Phillies reliever Jeff Hoffman (0-1) surrendered a walk and single to open the seventh and Ronald Acuña Jr. lined a one-out single for a 2-1 lead.

BLUE JAYS 2, MARLINS 0

MIAMI (AP)—Ernie Clement and George Springer hit consecutive RBI singles in the eighth inning and Toronto beat Miami.

Yusei Kikuchi allowed

two hits and struck out six in six innings to help Toronto even the series after falling 11-0 in the opener Monday night. The Blue Jays ended a 19-inning scoreless streak in the eighth against Tanner Scott (4-2).

Miami's Luis Arraez went 1 for 4, dropping his major league-leading batting average to .398. The Marlins had won five in a row.

Yimi García (2-3) was the winner, pitching the seventh. Jordan Romano closed with a scoreless ninth for his 21st save.

RED SOX 10, TWINS 4

MINNEAPOLIS (AP)—Christian Arroyo had a career-high five hits and drove in four runs, Kutter Crawford (2-3) pitched five scoreless innings and Boston beat Minnesota for its sixth straight win.

Adam Duvall and Arroyo hit solo homers in the fourth to start the scoring, and Masataka Yoshida added a two-run shot in the eighth. Arroyo also hit a three-run double as part of a five-run seventh for Boston.

Corey Kluber allowed four runs on three homers but pitched the final three innings for his first career save.

Bailey Ober (4-4) surrendered three runs in six innings for AL Central-leading Minnesota, which has lost five of six and fell to a season-worst two games under .500 (36-38).

WHITE SOX 7, RANGERS 6

CHICAGO (AP)—Zach Remillard singled in Elvis Andrus with the go-ahead run on a play that was overturned by video review, and Chicago rallied with three runs in the eighth inning to beat Texas.

The White Sox overcame five RBIs by Corey Seager,

including a two-run double in the top of the eighth that put Texas ahead 6-4.

Andrus tied it with a single off Grant Anderson (1-1) that plated two runs with two outs. Remillard followed with a line drive to left field, and Andrus was initially called out at the plate by umpire D.J. Reyburn on Travis Jankowski's throw. Rangers manager Bruce Bochy was ejected after the call was overturned.

Andrus had a solo shot and finished with three RBIs. Eloy Jiménez hit a two-run homer for Chicago, which ended Texas' three-game winning streak and won for just the third time in 10 games.

Aaron Bummer (3-1) got the win despite retiring only one batter. Kendall Graveman pitched a scoreless ninth for his seventh save.

GUARDIANS 3, ATHLETICS 2, 10 INNINGS

CLEVELAND (AP)—Andrés Giménez's single in the 10th brought home José Ramírez from third base and Cleveland handed Oakland its sixth straight loss.

With the bases loaded and none out, Giménez dropped his single off Trevor May (2-4) just inside the right-field line for Cleveland's fourth walk-off win this season.

The Guardians were blanked for six innings before tying it in the seventh on Amed Rosario's RBI single and Ramírez's run-scoring double.

Enyel De Los Santos (3-1) kept the A's from taking the lead in the 10th.

Oakland dropped to 19-56, the club's worst record since the 1920 Philadelphia A's started with the same mark.

CUBS 4, PIRATES 0

PITTSBURGH (AP)—Marcus Stroman allowed

five hits over seven innings as Chicago handed Pittsburgh its eighth straight loss.

Stroman (9-4) struck out five, walked one and never let the Pirates get to third base while winning his seventh straight start. He needed just 97 pitches to get 21 outs, dropping his ERA to 2.28, tops in the National League.

Tucker Barnhart hit his first home run of the season for the Cubs. Mike Tauchman homered for the second time in three games as Chicago won for the seventh time in eight games.

Pittsburgh's offense offered no support to starter Johan Oviedo (3-7).

TIGERS 1, ROYALS 0

DETROIT (AP)—Daniel Lynch allowed one hit over seven innings for his first major league win in almost 11 months and Kansas City beat Detroit.

Kansas City had lost 12 of 13. Matt Beaty, making his first start for the Royals, drove in the only run with a sixth-inning double off Tigers starter Michael Lorenzen (2-5).

Javier Báez doubled with one out in the ninth for Detroit, but Scott Barlow retired the next two hitters for his eighth save, completing the two-hitter.

The Tigers were shut out for the 10th time this season and the sixth time in their last 20 games.

BREWERS 7, DIAMONDBACKS 5

MILWAUKEE (AP)—William Contreras hit a go-ahead, two-run double in the seventh inning and Milwaukee rallied from a 4-0 deficit to beat Arizona.

Jesse Winker hit his first homer of the season for the Brewers. Hoby Milner, Bryse Wilson (2-0), Joel Payamps and Devin Williams combined for 3 2/3 innings of shutout relief. Williams worked around a one-out walk in the ninth to earn his 13th save in 14 opportunities.

Ketel Marte went 3 for 5 with a three-run homer and double for the NL-West leading Diamondbacks.

CARDINALS 9, NATIONALS 3

WASHINGTON (AP)—Dylan Carlson homered twice, Willson Contreras went 3-for-4 with two doubles to break out of a slump, and St. Louis beat skidding Washington for its fourth straight win.

Paul DeJong also homered for the Cardinals.

As draft free agency loom, Riley's eyes remain on main thing

MIAMI (AP)—Pat Riley sometimes finds himself waking up in the middle of the night these days, turning on the television because he's unable to sleep.

This is when the president of the Miami Heat watches Garfield cartoons.

Turns out, his young grandson Connor is a big fan of the lasagna-loving cynical orange cartoon cat, so Riley—like many doting grandfathers probably would—has become a bit of a Garfield fan as well.

"Connor's going to love hearing this," Riley said.

Here's the part that Heat fans might love hearing: It's in these moments where Riley's mind is racing with thoughts about how close Miami came to a championship this season—and what needs to happen to get it done next season.

Riley held his annual end-of-season review Tuesday, reflecting on a year like few others and insisting that if there is a way to get better this summer, the Heat will do it. Miami nearly missed the playoffs and had to rally in the play-in tour-



AP
Miami Heat president Pat Riley gestures as he speaks during an end of season NBA basketball news conference, Tuesday, June 20, 2023, in Miami.

namment just to make the post-season, then made its way to the finals as the No. 8 seed in the Eastern Conference.

"Another championship team, that's my goal," Riley said. "I have no other plans other than to do that."

Retirement was not discussed during Riley's 35-minute session with reporters; he's shown no signs of slowing down and there's been no talk of any exit strategies for the

78-year-old who has been part of nine NBA championships—three in Miami.

The Heat were involved in the trade talks over the weekend that ultimately resulted in Bradley Beal waiving his no-trade clause to go from Washington to Phoenix, a deal that's still awaiting final approvals from all sides and the NBA. And if Portland's Damian Lillard decides he wants a trade, it's a poorly kept secret that

Miami would be more than willing to talk to the perennial All-Star and gauge his interest in joining the Heat.

Riley, by league rule, cannot talk about players under contract elsewhere. But his approach every summer is to find the player or players who can bring Miami closer to a title. That won't change this summer, and he doesn't think the current roster has to be decimated to make

change happen either.

"We're not going to take a wrecking ball to this thing," Riley said, channeling the lyrics of his friend Bruce Springsteen, whom he quotes often. "Good times come, good times come. Hard times come, hard times come. We're not going to take a wrecking ball to a good team that had some real adversity this year. We had a good team, probably a great team. We wouldn't have as gotten as far as we have, and there's no caveat in any of that, if you weren't a great team."

Riley raved about Jimmy Butler, who just finished his fourth season in Miami—"he's a whole different bag of tricks, let me tell you, and love him to death," Riley

said—and spoke at length about the continued evolution of Bam Adebayo and Tyler Herro from late-lottery picks to integral parts of the Heat plan.

There's a No. 18 pick in Thursday's draft to add, then free agency awaits a week later. If a move presents itself, Riley is ready to pounce. If not, he won't panic.

"Persistence and perseverance has been something that's been part of my life forever. Just has been," Riley said. "And patience is the last thing that came with it. And so, we're going to show some patience here instead of react without knowing what the consequences could be in doing something. So right now, this is what we have."

Wembanyama listed at 7-foot-4, but check back later in September



AP
Boulogne-Levallois' Victor Wembanyama dunks the ball in action during the playoffs of the Elite basketball match Boulogne-Levallois against Monaco at the Roland Garros stadium in Paris, Thursday, June 15, 2023.

NEW YORK (AP)—The tall task of determining Victor Wembanyama's height isn't finished yet.

The expected No. 1 pick in the NBA draft might be 7-foot-4. Maybe not, though. While the league is listing him at that height in the draft guide on its media website, it's not official.

Check back in September.

That's the deadline for the San Antonio Spurs—assuming they take Wembanyama with the first pick as expected Thursday night—to submit an official height for him without shoes to the league.

Wembanyama's height listed in the draft guide falls in the middle of conflicting reports about how tall the Frenchman is. It's not official, however, because Wembanyama didn't attend the NBA Draft Combine in May, where prospects are measured.

Wembanyama, who arrived in New York on Monday and was scheduled to throw out the first pitch before a Yankees game on Tuesday, said he was 7-3 in October during his French pro team's

exhibition games in Las Vegas. But, at just 19 years old, it's possible he wasn't done growing by then.

That would explain why an internet search of his height turns up everything from 7-2 to 7-5.

Not that it really matters to the Spurs, who will likely be the first to know for sure just how tall Wembanyama is.

Meanwhile, Wembanyama threw out a wild ceremonial first pitch before the New York Yankees played the Seattle Mariners on Tuesday night.

He wore a pinstriped jersey with "New York" across the chest rather than the traditional interlocking "NY," and he had Joe DiMaggio's No. 5 on the back. Standing on the rubber, he fired the ball in the dirt, well wide of the plate to the first-base side.

The 19-year-old spent this past season with Metropolitans 92 in the French league. The NBA lists his height as 7-4. He has said 7-3 and some internet sites show 7-5.

The NBA draft is Thursday at Barclays Center in Brooklyn.

Twins Amen and Ausar Thompson set to be taken in Top 10 of NBA Draft

For all the things the Thompson Twins share—middle name, appetite for burgers, dynamic basketball skill sets—matching suits on draft night won't be one of them.

Amen and Ausar Thompson are dressing for success in their own unique style as they prepare to go in their own separate directions for really the first time. The 6-foot-7 guards out of Overtime Elite are projected in the AP mock draft to be selected in the top 10 Thursday night in New York.

That means, barring a daring move by a team, they will wind up in different cities.

It's a situation that's still hard to fully fathom for the 20-year-olds from California. It's also a situation that reveals another shared trait: Their sense of humor.

"We'll just constantly text each other," explained Amen, who's the older twin by a minute.

"But you don't check your phone," Ausar quickly countered.

"He's lying," Amen responded.

Kidding aside, their aim is to live up to their shared middle name of "XLNC" (pronounced excellence), which was bestowed on them to convey a sense of power.

"Just so with every time you're saying their name, there's that power behind it," their dad, Troy, said. "Excellence, greatness—we always use all these power words and so do they, in their own expres-

sions, so they're always thinking on that high note."

The Thompsons moved from the San Francisco Bay Area to Florida when the twins were in eighth grade to enhance their basketball careers. The playmakers shined at Pine Crest School in Fort Lauderdale, leading the team to a state title. They received offers from several traditional Power Five basketball programs.

Instead, they pivoted.

The twins took the road less traveled to the NBA draft by signing with Overtime Elite, a professional basketball league based in Atlanta that's opening another door to the pros for talented young players.

It was a chance to focus on basketball full-time and build up their strength. They did, too, adding 25 pounds of muscle over their two-year tenure with the league. An opportunity at a paycheck, too—Overtime Elite, which launched in 2021, compensates players with annual salaries of at least \$100,000.

Their first year, the twins played on different Overtime Elite teams.

This past season, they combined—and dominated.

Amen (rhymes with "a pen") averaged 17.2 points, 9.2 assists and 7.2 rebounds in the playoffs to lead the City Reapers to the championship.

Not to be outdone, Ausar (rhymes with "a car"), had a postseason in which he averaged 21 points, 4.8 assists and 5.2 rebounds.

When it came time to vote for the league's regular season MVP award, it was no surprise who voted for whom.

Ausar for Amen.

Amen for Ausar.

Ausar earned MVP (along with the postseason version, too).

"It would have been funny" if Ausar won by one vote, Amen joked. "I would've taken mine back."

They enjoy teasing one another—and pushing each other. They're always in the gym, hoisting up shots or working on their footwork. They're competitive, too, whether it be in friendly games on the court or in the video game NBA 2K, where they're in agreement—Ausar reigns supreme on the video-game controller in hoops.

Their go-to meal comes from In-N-Out Burger. Ausar prefers a double cheeseburger with lettuce and special sauce, maybe grilled onions. Amen likes the same, just hold the cheese.

Amen's scouting report reads like this: Explosive athleticism, with exceptional court vision. Can break down defenders with his ball-handling skills and elite first step.

Ausar's report: Essentially the same as his brother.

Ausar projects as more of a combo guard and Amen as a ball handler in the NBA. Amen is predicted to go fourth overall to Houston and Ausar sixth to Orlando.

Their dad saw a path to the twins being elite when they were around 8 and going against players three, some-

times four, years older.

"You knew that their forward trajectory was going to be fast, because they were already improving at such a high rate," Troy said. "From here on, I just want to enjoy watching them continue to grow into this dream and just achieve the greatness they always talked about."

They describe their bond as "twin telepathy," which Ausar said comes in handy not only on the basketball floor but in life.

Don't ask for specifics, though, because that's top secret.

"It would be bad for the world if everybody knew how to do it. I just know where he's going to be at all times," Ausar said.

Leading into the draft, they've been traveling to work out for interested teams. In Portland, they met Damian Lillard. A year ago, they were introduced to Golden State Warriors great Stephen Curry at his camp.

"It's super cool meeting them," Ausar said.

Amen and Ausar said they've competed against many of the big names in the draft class with the exception of Victor Wembanyama, the French star who is expected to go No. 1 to the San Antonio Spurs.

The twins are bracing for the likely separation and distance between them. They're even planning for the big moment when both meet on the same NBA court at a soon-to-be-determined spot. (AP)

Mizutani secures hole-in-one victory at Chamber golf tourney



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
Justin Mizutani poses with the 2023 Mitsubishi Outlander hole-in-one prize sponsored by Triple J Motors in last Saturday's 14th Annual Golf Tournament at the LaoLao Bay Golf & Resort.

The Saipan Chamber of Commerce is excited to announce Justin Mizutani as the winner of the hole-in-one contest at the 14th Annual Golf Tournament held last Saturday, June 17.

Mizutani showed exceptional golf skills by achieving a hole-in-one on hole No. 3, which was a difficult shot from a distance of 178 yards. As a reward for this impressive accomplishment, Justin received a brand new 2022 Mitsubishi Outlander sponsored by Triple J Motors.

The 14th Annual Golf Tournament, organized by the Saipan Chamber of Commerce, attracted participants from the local community and beyond. The event provided an opportunity for

golfers to display their talent while supporting the Chamber's Educational Scholarship Fund, which is a great cause. We want to express our sincere appreciation to everyone who participated and contributed to the tournament's success.

"We would like to thank all the golfers who joined us for this memorable day on the golf course. Their enthusiasm, sportsmanship, and unwavering support created a lively and enjoyable atmosphere throughout the event. We hope that each participant had a fantastic experience and enjoyed playing golf in the beautiful surroundings of Saipan," the Chamber said.

It said the highlight of the

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
Justin Mizutani tees off from the tee box of hole No. 3 in last Saturday's 14th Annual Golf Tournament at the LaoLao Bay Golf & Resort.



TEAM

From Page 20

nis Borja and up-and-coming young prodigy Matua San Nicholas.

When asked what each athlete worked on in their training, Rangamar said "Each discipline (event) has different approaches to their training, for example distance runners focus on cardio, tempo, pace etc., while sprinters focus on strength and speed. Jumpers and throwers focus on plyometrics and dynamic power and strength. At this stage of the season though, everyone is focused on being sharp and competition ready."

As for what the team is feeling heading toward the event, he said that being the host and at home helps a lot with the jitters and anxieties of competition. With his expectations for the team, he said, "Like I alluded to earlier, our team is still young so our expectations are for our athletes to compete at the highest level, hopefully set some personal best, national

records and garner us some medals along the way. Most importantly, we hope our athletes get a ton of experience and fun."

For middle distance runner Chavez, she told *Saipan Tribune* that "Training for the Oceania has been hard since I've been balancing soccer and running... I'm looking forward to gaining more experience and this is a once in a lifetime experience so I'll just enjoy the moment, as well as being able to watch



LEIGH GASES
Lyle Andrew, who represents CNMI in the shot put and discus throw, winds up for the discus throw during the Northern Marianas Athletics Challenge last June 10 in preparation of the Oceania Cup at the Oleai Sports Complex.

runners from different islands compete. I think I'm physically ready, I'll just give it my all and hope to represent the NMI well."

Multiple World Championships representative Sapong, who is competing in the 100m and 200m sprint, also said that she's excited to compete. She said their previous Northern Marianas Athletics Challenge helped her prepare for the upcoming events.

CNMI's athletics team members are the following:

Aaron Pamintuan, Saim Ali, Lyle Andrew, Anthony Borja, Dennis Borja, Greg Borja, Tim Brasuell, Alexander Camacho, Lawrence Camacho, Kaithlyn Chavez, Rosemarie Chisato, Colleen Cing, Casey Cruz, Sly Defang, Cheraline Epity, Kelvin Fitial, Erin Frink, Jess Garriguez, Savannah Grant, Nick Gross, Tony Ichiuo, Maria Igitol, Sheila Isla, Jacoby Winkfield, Changhwan Jang, Daniel Joab, Paul Khang, Greg Koebel, Chong Nam Lee, James Lee, James Lin, Keith Longuski, Michael Mancao, Akiko Miller, Beouch Ngirchonger, Maria Ornes, Jessica Ortizo, Micah Page, Fema Pelaez, Orrin Pharmin, Pony Tang, Leith Poole, Kina Rangamar, Lia'Mwar Rangamar, Michael Rodgers, Theodore Rodgers, Kathy Ruscala, Matua San Nicholas, Angel San Nicolas, Zarinna Sapong, Chiharu Sato, Kosuke Sato, Elizabeth Sawyer, Mike Sawyer, Cody Shimizu, Sildrey Voloria, Simon Necesito, Simon Tang, Tania Tan, Tiana Cabrera, Kathleen Tolentino, Raymond Tolentino, Leo Wania, and Kathleen Winkfield.

tournament was undoubtedly Mizutani's amazing hole-in-one.

"His incredible shot on hole No. 3 will be remembered as a remarkable achievement in Saipan's golfing history. Congratulations to Justin for his exceptional skill and determination that led to this outstanding accomplishment. We would also like to extend our sincere appreciation to our sponsors and partners who generously contributed to the success of this event. Without their support, this tournament would

not have been possible."

For further inquiries or information about the Saipan Chamber of Commerce and its future events, visit their website at www.saipan-chamber.com or contact their office at contactus@saipan-chamber.com.

For more information about the event or the Chamber, visit their website at www.saipanchamber.com, visit their office in the Marianas Business Plaza (Susupe) at the 2nd floor, Suite 201-A, or give us a call at our office at (670) 234- 7150. (PR)

BADMINTON

From Page 20

of this level."

"It was a fantastic effort by the Northern Marianas Badminton Association. They've put on a very spectacular two tournaments. This was really one of the best tournaments in Oceania the way it's put up for the spectators, the players, the officials, for everyone. It's fantastic," he added.

Wong said about the players that participated, "there's no doubt the Asians and some of the Europeans dominate badminton. They are all professional players. The players

here, some are very high level even from Asia—they've played in some of the big tournaments and are here to collect Olympic points... Some of the players are also looking for ranking points, so they are at a different level."

The Crowne Plaza Northern Marianas Open 2023 was the first tournament that was held from June 6 to 11. Chinese-Taipei swept three events, while South Korea took home two championships. The TakeCare Saipan International 2023 was from June 13 to June 18, with Chinese-Taipei and Japan taking home two championships, while USA won one.



LEIGH GASES

Badminton Oceania president Loke Poh Wong thanks the Northern Marianas Badminton Association for a successful hosting of the two recently concluded badminton qualifiers and presented a certificate of appreciation to NMBA board members last Sunday at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium.

2023

From Page 20

nament chair Juko Ishikawa. "We always aim to please with our tournament, and the Mazda 3 Hatchback is a beautiful car that we hope one lucky winner will drive away with."

The early bird tournament fee is \$150 and includes optional play this year, as well as green fees and an awards luncheon. The fee increases to \$170 after the early bird deadline on Friday, July 2,

at 5pm. Option play will include accurate drive (hole No. 9) and four chances for nearest to the pin (holes No. 3, 7, 13, and 17). Showtime is 6am and the tournament will start at 7am. The tournament will be open to the first 144 paid registrants.

Registration forms can be downloaded at www.saipanhoteles.org. For more information, contact Tournament Chairman Juko Ishikawa at worldresort@pticom.com. (PR)



Hicks drives in 4 runs as Orioles beat AL East-leading Rays.
PAGE 17

Saipan Tribune Sports

Mizutani secures hole-in-one victory at Chamber golf tourney.
PAGE 19



20 THURSDAY, JUNE 22, 2023

SAIPAN TRIBUNE

Badminton Oceania president gives high praises to NMBA

By LEIGH GASES
leigh_gases@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The CNMI has just recently concluded hosting for the first time two badminton Olympic qualifiers—the Crowne Plaza Northern Marianas Open 2023 and TakeCare Saipan International 2023.

The tournaments held over the past couple of weeks welcomed more than 200 players, coaches, and officials from 19 different countries, and according to Badminton Oceania president Loke Poh Wong, the Northern Marianas Badminton Association has put the CNMI on the world map for badminton.



From left, NMI badminton player and Northern Marianas Badminton Association vice president Nathan Guerrero and NMBA treasurer Shirley Kim pose with NMBA president Merlie Tolentino, holding the certificate of appreciation from Badminton Oceania Loke Poh Wang, right, during the awards ceremony of the TakeCare Saipan International 2023 last Sunday at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

During the awards ceremony of the TakeCare Saipan International 2023 last Sunday, Badminton Oceania gave the host NMBA a certificate of appreciation for the success of hosting the two qualifiers.

“This is the first time NMBA has hosted an event of this level and hopefully it’s not the last. So, to our sponsor Jerry Tan, president of the Northern Marianas Sports Association, thank you for the support and for your team. They have done a great job. The hospitality we’ve experienced over the past weeks has been outstanding. So, we certainly have put the Northern Marianas Badminton Association on the world map for badminton,” said Wong.

As for what it means for the CNMI’s hosting of an international badminton tournament of this scale, he said “This is very good news for Oceania and it’s very good news for the world of badminton that CNMI can host an international tournament

See **BADMINTON** on **Page 19**

Team NMI ready for Oceania Cup



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Some members of the CNMI Athletics Team for the Oceania Cup and Oceania Athletics Masters Championships pose for a group photo at the Oleai Sports Complex track and field—the venue for the event—that starts today, Thursday, until Sunday, June 25.

By LEIGH GASES
leigh_gases@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The 69-member athletics team representing the CNMI in the Oceania Cup and the Oceania Athletics Masters Championships is ready to storm the track and field of the Oleai Sports Complex starting today, June 22, until June 25.



For two days of the Oceania Cup, athletes from Melanesia, Micronesia, Polynesia, and the Northern Marianas will sprint, jump, and throw for a chance at a podium finish. The Masters Championships are next until the last day of events on June 25.

Head coach for the CNMI team, Elias Rangamar, said although most of the members are young, he thinks that they are up to the challenge and ready to get going with the events.

He said about the team, “Overall our team is composed of youth athletes and most are still developing ath-

letes. We will be going up against seasoned athletes but this will only help us with the experience leading up to the Micronesian Games next year. We do have a few veteran athletes plus a horde of master’s athletes that will be suiting up for the games as well.”

With that, he said that he’s confident that the CNMI team will get a fair share of the medals.

The middle distance group, led by NMI Female Athlete of the Year and NMI record holder Tania Tan, and high school phenom Kaithlyn Chavez, will lead the charge with a host of other gritty middle distance runners.

The CNMI team also includes several athletes from Tinian—2022 Pacific Mini Games bronze medalist Den-

See **TEAM** on **Page 19**

2023 Mazda 3 Hatchback from Triple J at HANMI tourney



Hole-in-one sponsor Triple J Motors has presented a 2023 Mazda 3 Hatchback Sport Sedan as an enticer for the 21st Annual HANMI Charity Classic Golf Tournament on July 15, 2023, at LaoLao Bay Golf & Resort.

“Congratulations HANMI on another successful Golf Tournament this year! Wishing the CNMI a speedy recovery to our tourism market,” said Triple J Motors general manager Sean Ficke. “Good luck to all the players, and have fun out there on the course!”

The tournament follows a blackjack double peoria format, a portion of this year’s proceeds will benefit Marian-



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Triple J Motors Sales manager Steve Sablan, seventh right, presents a 2023 Mazda 3 Hatchback Sport Sedan at their showroom for the 21st Annual HANMI Charity Classic Golf Tournament, scheduled for July 15, 2023, at LaoLao Bay Golf & Resort west course in Saipan. Also pictured are other Triple J Motors management and staff and members of the HANMI Charity Classic Golf Tournament Committee.

as Tourism Education Council and 500 Sails.

“We’re extremely grateful for Triple J Motors’ continual

support through the years of the HANMI Charity Classic Golf Tournament,” said Tour-

See **2023** on **Page 19**